

Illinois Nature Preserves Commission  
Minutes of the 203<sup>rd</sup> Meeting  
(Approved at the 204<sup>th</sup> Meeting)

Illinois Beach Resort and Conference Center  
Illinois Room  
1 Lake Forest Drive  
Zion, IL 60099

Tuesday, September 22, 2009

203-1) Call to Order, Roll Call, and Introduction of Attendees

At 10:00 a.m., pursuant to the Call to Order of Chair Riddell, the meeting began.

Deborah Stone read the roll call.

Members present: Jill Allread, Harry Drucker, Ron Flemal, Richard Keating, Jill Riddell, Lauren Rosenthal, Bruce Ross-Shannon, and John Schwegman.

Members absent: Mare Payne

Others present: Steven Byers, Judy Faulkner Dempsey, Bryan Eubanks, Randy Heidorn, Tom Lerczak, Mitchell Lovgren, Angella Moorehouse, Kelly Neal, John Nelson, Debbie Reider, Kim Roman, and Jenny Skufca, Illinois Nature Preserves Commission (INPC); Duane Ambroz, Don McFall, Brad Semel, and Penny Synder, Office of Resource Conservation (ORC), Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR); Tom Flattery and Connie Waggoner, Office of Realty and Environmental Planning (OREP), IDNR; Anne Mankowski, Illinois Endangered Species Protection Board (ESPB); Bob Weichert, Illinois Historic Preservation Agency (IHPA); Joseph Roth, CorLands and INPC Consultant; Ken Fiske, Conservation Services and INPC Consultant; Becky Marruffo, Bill McWethy, and Dr. Cassandra Rodgers, Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) District 2; Jim Anderson, Tom Hahn, and Rebecca Jansen, Lake County Forest Preserve District (LCFPD), representing the proposed Kildeer Creek and Woodland Land and Water Reserve; Betty Hegner and Richard Hegner, representing the proposed Halo Hill Tree Farm and Artists Retreat Land and Water Reserve; Mary Horgan, ParkLands Foundation, representing the proposed Chinquapin Bluffs Land and Water Reserve; Steve Barg and Tim Girmscheid, Liberty Prairie Conservancy; Vincent Olivares and Dr. Doug Taron, Chicago Academy of Sciences; Jolie Krasinski, Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation; Robert Ijams, Hitchcock Design Group; Alan Grzyb and Kelly Rajzer, Village of Romeoville Parks and Recreation Department; Darlene Fiske; and Bob Soderholm.

203-2) Adoption of Agenda

It was moved by Ross-Shannon, seconded by Rosenthal, and carried that the Agenda be adopted.

Chair Riddell stated that she would like to thank Brad Semel for the field trip at Illinois Beach State Park on September 21, 2009. She also thanked Greg Behm, Site Superintendent for Illinois Beach State Park, Steven Byers, and John Nelson for their help in getting the field trip organized.

Chair Riddell reported that at the 202<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the INPC, held on May 5, 2009, at the Starved Rock Visitors Center, Utica, legal protection for seven tracts of land totaling 2,050.59 acres was approved by the Commission. Of these, two areas totaling 152.39 acres are owned by private individuals or not-for-profit corporations who donated the value of the protection agreement to the public. This private land was permanently preserved without acquisition of the land by the State. The dollar value of the tracts of private land is \$590,000 based on conservative estimates of the fair market value of the land. Private lands protected without State acquisition at INPC's 202<sup>nd</sup> Meeting were a buffer addition to Stony Hills Nature Preserve in Hancock County and the George B. Fell Prairie Addition to Gensburg-Markham Prairie Nature Preserve in Cook County. Protection of this land came about because the Commission has nine staff members in the field working with private land owners. There are now 347 dedicated nature preserves in 83 counties, totaling 47,369.398 acres and 153 land and water reserves in 64 counties, totaling 43,017.294 acres.

Chair Riddell stated that the Commissioners should have received a copy of the Biennial Report for the years 2003-2006. She stated that the Commission is required to submit such a report. She urged the Commissioners to submit their comments regarding the report to Randy Heidorn as soon as possible. The report, which is a great resource, will be made available to the public in the near future.

203-3) Approval of the 202<sup>nd</sup> Meeting Minutes, May 5, 2009

It was moved by Allread, seconded by Keating, and carried that the Minutes of the 202<sup>nd</sup> Meeting, May 5, 2009, be approved.

203-4) Proposed 2010 Meeting Schedule

January 26, 2010	10:00 a.m.	Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Springfield
May 4, 2010	9:00 a.m.	Henry N. Barkhausen Cache River Wetlands Center, Cypress
September 21, 2010	10:00 a.m.	Burpee Museum of Natural History, Rockford

It was moved by Drucker, seconded by Keating, and carried that the 2010 meeting schedule be approved as presented.

203-5) Election of Advisors and Consultants

Commissioner Ross-Shannon stated that a list of nominated advisors and consultants was on the Agenda under Item 5.

There were no other nominations from the floor.

It was moved by Drucker, seconded by Rosenthal, and carried that the following be elected as advisors to the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission: Dr. Mike Demissie, Janet S. Grimes, Dr. E. Donald McKay, III, Dr. John C. Marlin, Dr. William Shilts, and Dr. Gary Miller; and the following be elected as consultants to the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission: Gerald Adelman, Marilyn Campbell, Tom Clay, Kenneth Fiske, Jerry Paulson, Joseph Roth, Valerie Spale, Leslee Spraggins, and John White.

203-6) INPC Staff Report

Randy Heidorn presented the INPC staff report attached as Exhibit A.

Mr. Heidorn stated that he wanted to highlight an activity that was reported at Kinney's Ford Seep Land and Water Reserve in Vermilion County. The site is owned by the IDNR. There was a project to address a hydrologic problem on adjacent IDNR-owned land. The INPC was involved with this in two ways. The Department asked the Commission to review some of the procedures that occurred at the site in terms of the endangered species issues. After Commission staff investigated the situation, recommendations were put together and given to the IDNR. In the process of conducting this investigation, the INPC staff found out that the IDNR made a decision to stockpile some materials on the Land and Water Reserve parking lot. This action was not approved by Commission. The fill was actually stockpiled adjacent to the parking lot in a disturbed area. The damage within the Land and Water Reserve was minimal; however, this activity was a violation of the land and water reserve agreement. Commission staff drafted a letter for Chair Riddell's signature to be sent to the IDNR. The letter asked the Department to remove the material, restore the area, and to adjust procedures to make sure this never happens again. The IDNR has accepted those recommendations, and it has been working on a document to outline the work flow processes so this type of activity does not happen again.

Jenny Skufca updated the Commission on the INPC photo contest. In mid June, 2009, there were no entries for the INPC portion of the photo contest. Commissioners, Advisors, Consultants, and other partners were contacted to enlist their help in the promotion of this event. One month later, *OutdoorIllinois* magazine was declaring it a record year with 151 entries in the INPC category. By the photo contest deadline, August 7, 2009, the Commission had 61 sites represented among 225 photos. The *OutdoorIllinois* contest more than doubled the entries for 2008, and it has regularly given the Commission credit for this increase. Ms. Skufca stated that Commissioner Allread came to Springfield and judged 1,879 photos for the magazine. There were 18 INPC category winners who will be featured in the February, 2010 *OutdoorIllinois* photographic edition. Openlands has agreed to serve as the Commission's fiscal agent with regard to the photo contest. All INPC photos are due to the Illinois State Museum in October, 2009, for exhibit preparation. Plans are now being set for choosing INPC's favorites, displaying the photos at its January, 2010 meeting, an early 2010 event celebrating the achievement of reaching its 500<sup>th</sup> site, creating a 2010 Illinois State Fair display, and creating a travel display of the photos. She stated that the Dixon Mounds Museum and the McHenry Conservation District Prairie View Education Center have expressed interest in hosting the photo display. The photo contest has been a grand success and a fitting tribute to the accomplishment of the Commission's 500<sup>th</sup> protected site.

Ms. Skufca stated that the actual photos remain in the possession of the magazine staff and will stay there until all winners have been announced.

Chair Riddell thanked Ms. Skufca for her efforts with the photo contest, and she thanked Commissioner Allread for her efforts.

Commissioner Allread stated that Ms. Skufca has been the engine for this entire machine, and without her, this would not have happened. She stated that the magazine is wonderfully organized, but to have doubled the entries for the photo contest is a tribute to Ms. Skufca's efforts in getting the word out. The Commission now has this wonderful representation of the nature preserves around the State, contributed by citizens who use and respect those areas. She stated that she felt there was an intangible benefit to getting people out to these areas to see how fabulous they are.

202-7) IDNR Staff Report

Don McFall presented the IDNR staff report attached as Exhibit B.

Commissioner Drucker asked if the staff working on the Illinois Natural Areas Inventory (INAI) update are identifying and eliminating many natural areas that are currently on the list that are no longer eligible.

Mr. McFall stated that the INAI update has two goals. The first goal is to look for new sites using the same standards and guidelines of the original Inventory. The second goal is to go back to the Category I sites to see if those sites are still eligible.

203-8) Endangered Species Protection Board Report

Anne Mankowski presented the ESPB report attached as Exhibit C.

Ms. Mankowski stated that she had provided a copy of the ESPB fiscal year 2011 budget request for each Commissioner. This budget request was approved by the ESPB at its August, 2009 meeting. She stated that the request had been forwarded to Director Miller. The ESPB has been without a budget since 2002. She stated that the IDNR has very generously assisted with funding for part-time staff and for her current position as the Director under a three year commitment. She stated that the Board is hoping to get the line item in the IDNR budget reinstated. The budget request of \$329,800 was for the full staffing of the ESBP.

Ms. Mankowski stated that the ESPB is scheduled to meet on November 13, 2009 at Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie, Wilmington.

Chair Riddell stated that the registration agreements for today's land and water reserve presentations are signed and executed by the landowners as required by administrative rule.

203-9) Lake Co. B Kildeer Creek and Woodland Land and Water Reserve, Registration

Steven Byers presented a proposal on behalf of the Lake County Forest Preserve District (LCFPD) to register Kildeer Creek and Woodland as an Illinois land and water reserve. The proposed land and water reserve is 64.93 acres in size and is located in the Morainal Section of the Northeastern Morainal Natural Division. The site is located adjacent to Reed-Turner Woodland Nature Preserve (INAI #0228). The proposed land and water reserve includes 16 acres of grade C dry-mesic upland forest that extends into Reed-Turner Woodland Nature Preserve. Those surviving forests are part of a woodland that once extended along Indian Creek and Kildeer Creek from the Village of Long Grove for a distance of nearly five miles to Deer Grove Forest Preserve in Cook County. Other communities included in the proposed land and water reserve include a grade C mesic floodplain forest, a grade D sedge meadow, and an old field community. The LCFPD has embarked upon an aggressive restoration plan for the site. In return for receipt of funds earmarked for restoration by Openlands Project, the LCFPD has agreed to "...promptly and diligently make an application to the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission for approval, by the Commission and the Director of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, of the Reserve Areas as a permanent registered Illinois Land and Water Reserve." While the proposed 64.93-acre land and water reserve does not meet the criteria commonly associated with registration of a site as an Illinois land and water reserve, the proposed land and water reserve does buffer Reed-Turner Woodland Nature Preserve. Registration of this site is consistent with the recommendations of the "*Biodiversity Recovery Plan for the Chicago Wilderness Region*" and elements of the Illinois Wildlife Action Plan (IWAP) Forest Campaign which calls for ecological connectivity among forests and other habitat patches. Extensive wildlife surveys have been conducted in nearby Reed-Turner Woodland Nature Preserve, and it is very likely that nine bird species and two game bird species recorded from that site and identified in the IWAP as species in greatest need of conservation also occur within the proposed land and water reserve.

Mr. Byers stated that a master plan has been developed for this site. He stated that trails do extend to the south through the proposed land and water reserve, and the LCFPD reserves the right to maintain the current trail system. The LCFPD reserves the right to provide for all recreational uses commonly attributed to Illinois land and water reserves, including shoreline fishing only along Salem Lake. The LCFPD also reserves the right to continue adaptive management strategies and to monitor both the surface hydrology and groundwater within the proposed land and water reserve.

It was moved by Allread, seconded by Rosenthal, and carried that the following resolution be adopted:

The Commission grants approval for the registration of Kildeer Creek and Woodland in Lake County as an Illinois land and water reserve, as described in the proposal presented under Item 9 of the Agenda for the 203<sup>rd</sup> Meeting.

(Resolution 2044)

Tom Hahn, LCFPD, welcomed the Commission to Lake County. He stated that he was very proud of the forest preserve system. The LCFPD has just less than 28,000 acres in its program. A large bond referendum was passed last year, and it was hoped that more property will be added to the LCFPD to bring it up to 32,000 over the next three to five years. He stated the LCFPD was very concerned about the long term protection of the Forest Preserve sites. He stated that approximately nine months ago Mr. Byers

attended one of their Commission meetings. Mr. Hahn stated that Mr. Byers energized the LCFPD Commissioners to look at a program that will find various ways to put additional protections on its properties, including the registration and dedication that the INPC offers. The LCFPD is also looking at ways to put deed restrictions, conservation easements, and covenants on all of its sites to protect them long term. Lake County is an urbanizing county, and it is receiving a great deal of pressure from outside interest to use the land for other purposes. The LCFPD Commission recognizes that it took hard work to put that system together, and it wants to make sure that this land remains as open space well into the future. The LCFPD is embarking on an effort over the next two or three years to protect all of its land and provide additional protection. He stated that the LCFPD will be back before the Commission for additional dedications and registrations of its land. Mr. Hahn stated that the INPC provides an excellent protection mechanism for the people of Lake County, and the LCFPD intends to take advantage of that. He stated that Jim Anderson and Rebecca Jansen will be working toward this effort.

Chair Riddell thanked Mr. Hahn for his comments, and she said that the Commission is honored to be able to partner with the LCFPD to protect those sites well into the future.

203-10) McHenry Co. – Halo Hill Tree Farm and Artists Retreat Land and Water Reserve, Registration

Steven Byers presented a proposal on behalf of Richard, Betty, John, and Chehalis Hegner to register the Halo Hill Tree Farm and Artists Retreat as an Illinois land and water reserve. The proposed land and water reserve is 437.43 acres in size and is located in the Morainal Section of the Northeastern Morainal Natural Division. The site is located in the upper reach of the North Branch of the Kishwaukee River in the North Branch Kishwaukee River subwatershed; just upstream from the Kishwaukee River INAI site (#0720). This INAI site was recognized for its high-quality aquatic habitat. The proposed land and water reserve is located adjacent to Brookdale, a 1397-acre tract owned by the McHenry County Conservation District. The proposed land and water reserve includes 18 tree stands (a cultural community referred to as a plantation), grade C sedge meadow, basin marsh, and wet prairie, and surviving elements of dry-mesic upland forest and dry-mesic savanna. One part of the name for the proposed land and water reserve refers to the 18 tree stands, totaling 371.5 acres, in the Stewardship Forest Management Plan approved by the IDNR. The proposed land and water reserve meets one criteria for designation as an Illinois land and water reserve because it contains wetlands at least 50 acres in size or an area that includes several wetlands totaling 50 acres in size. It is also very likely the site provides suitable habitat for one state-listed reptile species which is another criteria. The three wetlands identified on the McHenry County Natural Areas Inventory were also included on the McHenry County Advanced Identification (ADID) for their high functional value. The other part of the name for the proposed land and water reserve includes reference to an artists retreat. The Hegner family remains committed to using art, in concert with this protected landscape, to promote conservation. Registration of this site is consistent with elements of the IWAP Forest Campaign which calls for ecological connectivity among forests and other habitat patches.

Mr. Byers reviewed the reserved rights contained in the proposal. The Hegner family reserves the right to provide for all recreational uses commonly attributed to Illinois land and water reserves. The Hegner family also reserves the right to maintain the current mowed trail system with possible modification to support the

Stewardship Forest Management Plan and provide access to the site for artists. The Hegners reserve the right to provide signage and trail amenities (benches, regulatory and educational signs, picnic tables, bird observation platform, additional parking, and fencing) in the future. The Hegner family also wishes to provide amenities that will support the use of the site by artists by having no more than ten improved sites. The use of those sites could include temporary tenting or small, self-contained trailers or vehicles that would allow artists to use the site for a limited period of time. Tents or vehicles used in this manner would not remain in place for more than 14 days, and improved sites would be used from May 1 through October 31.

Mr. Byers stated that this request was a change from the original management schedule. The improvements would consist of an improved parking pad (25' x 30') to accommodate a vehicle or tent at sites approved by the Commission. The parking pad would remain mowed, and, if necessary, could include crushed limestone, gravel base, or pavement pavers. Improvements would not include installation of electric, water, or sewer, but could include temporary toilets and portable water containers. The site will be used by artists of all types (poets, film makers, photographers, etc.) and for environmental education.

Commissioner Rosenthal asked what oversight would there be to make sure the artists' camp sites are managed properly.

Mr. Byers stated that Mr. and Mrs. Hegner will work with their children to put restrictions on the activities and uses so that conservation education will be promoted.

Commissioner Drucker asked if this will be a not-for-profit activity.

Richard Hegner stated that there will be a committee to pick artists from all over the world to come to the site without charge. The stipulation will be that the artist will have to demonstrate their talent to the community.

Mr. Byers stated that the details regarding a not-for-profit or for-profit activity have yet to be worked out.

Mrs. Hegner stated that they have discussed the possibility of this activity being supported by other means because they would not be able to finance this.

Commissioner Flemal stated that he was well aware of this site, and it was his opinion that this was some of the freshest Morainal country in the State of Illinois. He stated that he brought students to this site on a regular basis.

It was moved by Flemal, seconded by Rosenthal, and carried that the following resolution be adopted:

The Commission grants approval for the registration of Halo Hill Tree Farm and Artists Retreat in McHenry County as an Illinois land and water reserve, as described in the proposal presented under Item 10 of the Agenda for the 203<sup>rd</sup> Meeting.

(Resolution 2045)

Chair Riddell thanked Mr. and Mrs. Hegner for their registration of this land and water reserve.

203-11) Woodford Co. – Chinquapin Bluffs Land and Water Reserve, Registration

Tom Lerczak presented a proposal on behalf of the ParkLands Foundation to register Chinquapin Bluffs as an Illinois land and water reserve. The 756.98-acre Chinquapin Bluffs site, in three non-adjacent tracts (Chinquapin West, 548.35 acres; Chinquapin East, 169.74 acres; Chinquapin South, 38.89 acres), is owned by the ParkLands Foundation. Chinquapin Bluffs has river frontage along approximately 1.7 miles of the Mackinaw River Natural Area (INAI #0788), which is the feature by which Chinquapin Bluffs is being proposed as a land and water reserve. Of the total 1.7 miles of river frontage, 0.9 miles at Chinquapin West and 0.5 miles at Chinquapin East are located on both sides of the Mackinaw River; the remaining 0.3 miles at Chinquapin West are on the north side only. Chinquapin South does not have river frontage. The Mackinaw River Natural Area is listed on the INAI as a Category II site for the state-threatened slippershell mussel (*Alasmidonta viridis*) and the state-threatened spike mussel (*Elliptio dilatata*). It also has as a Category VI designation for an unusual concentration of mussel species. In 2001, the spike mussel was observed within the boundaries of Chinquapin Bluffs. The slippershell has not been similarly found. The Henslow's sparrow (*Ammodramus henslowii*) was recorded at Chinquapin Bluffs in 2008; this species is currently listed as state threatened, but it is in the process of being de-listed. Natural communities at Chinquapin Bluffs include grade C and grade D upland forests, grade C floodplain forest, grade C hill prairie, marsh, seep, pastureland dominated by cool-season grasses, and old fields succeeding to shrublands and forest. These communities are characteristic of the Grand Prairie Section of the Grand Prairie Natural Division. All communities are suffering from non-native plant invasions, especially early successional upland areas at Chinquapin West, where black locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*) and autumn olive (*Elaeagnus umbellata*) are particularly problematical. Eighteen species in greatest need of conservation, as defined by the IWAP, have been found at Chinquapin Bluffs (3 mussels, 15 birds). Registration of this site will help implement the IWAP through the following priority action campaigns: Streams, Forests, Prairies, Wetlands, Invasive Species, and Land and Water Stewardship. Management of Chinquapin Bluffs has been designed to protect and restore native plant communities, which will reduce surface runoff and sediment input to the Mackinaw River. The ParkLands Foundation wishes to have Chinquapin Bluffs permanently registered as a land and water reserve.

Mr. Lerczak stated that there is a 20-foot private lane that runs through Chinquapin West that is not owned by the ParkLands Foundation. This lane is owned by the landowner to the west and is not being proposed as part of this land and water reserve.

Mr. Lerczak stated that some of the allowable uses are hiking, birding, canoeing, nature observation and study, scientific research, deer hunting with restrictions, photography, and all-terrain vehicle use on trails for management purposes by designated individuals. Mushroom/berry collecting and fishing may be allowed on a case-by-case basis under restrictions yet to be determined by the ParkLands Board of Directors. The Woodford County Soil and Water Conservation District will be allowed to continue their annual Wilderness Camp for grade school students at Chinquapin Bluffs as previously established over a two-day period (no overnight stay). Existing trails, with gravel or dirt surfaces, will continue to be maintained to enable visitor access to the site and for management purposes. If additional trails become necessary for management



purposes, the trail design will involve consultation with IDNR staff and approval of the INPC.

Commissioner Drucker asked if any of these tracks would qualify as a nature preserve.

Mr. Lerczak stated that the terrestrial communities are, at best, grade C. The stream is really the qualifying feature. It could be designed to take the stream and adjacent riparian corridor to form a nature preserve with the remaining acreage designated as buffer. He stated that the ParkLands Foundation preferred to seek the land and water registration.

It was moved by Drucker, seconded by Keating, and carried that the following resolution be adopted:

The Commission grants approval for the registration of Chinquapin Bluffs in Woodford County as an Illinois land and water reserve, as described in the proposal presented under Item 11 of the Agenda for the 203<sup>rd</sup> Meeting.

(Resolution 2046)

Chair Riddell thanked Mary Horgan. She stated that the Commission appreciates the partnership that it has with the ParkLands Foundation.

Ms. Horgan stated that on behalf of the ParkLands Foundation Board and its members, she would like to thank the Commission for approving this site as a land and water reserve. She stated that she would also like to thank Mr. Lerczak for his work and preparing the proposal.

Commissioner Ross-Shannon stated that the three land and water reserve proposals presented at this meeting was an overview of what the Commission does. Property owned by a forest preserve district, a private citizen, and a not-for-profit group has been protected. He felt it was pretty heartening to see the commitment that these three different groups of people bring to the conservation effort.

Commissioner Drucker stated that the money to purchase at least one of the large tracts came from two people who taught school. Those individuals did not have children but wanted to leave a legacy so they donated the money to The Nature Conservancy to buy the land. The land was then transferred to the ParkLands Foundation.

203-12) Lake Co. – Grainger Woods Nature Preserve, Dedication

Steven Byers presented a proposal on behalf of the LCFPD for preliminary approval for dedication of Grainger Woods as an Illinois nature preserve. The proposed 169.4-acre nature preserve lies embedded within the 304.8 Grainger Woods Conservation Preserve; both are located in the Morainal Section of the Northeastern Morainal Natural Division. The proposed Grainger Woods Nature Preserve encompasses slightly more than half of the Grainger Flatwoods INAI site (#0667) and supports grade C dry-mesic upland forest, mesic upland forest, wet-mesic upland forest, northern flatwoods and an old-field community. The wet-mesic upland forest and the northern flatwoods are considered critically imperiled

globally and imperiled globally, respectively. Plant inventories have recorded 260 native plant species, including ten state-listed plant species. All of the state-listed plant species have habitat affinities for the “wet” conditions associated with the wet-mesic upland forest and northern flatwoods. Dedication of this site is consistent with recommendations from the *“Biodiversity Recovery Plan for the Chicago Wilderness Region,”* and elements of the IWAP Forests Campaign which calls for ecological connectivity among forests and other habitat patches. Nine bird species, one amphibian, and three insects recorded from Grainger Woods Conservation Preserve have been identified in the IWAP as species in greatest need of conservation. The LCFPD plans to route and construct a bike trail along the southern border of the proposed nature preserve adjacent to Everett Road.

Mr. Byers stated that the LCFPD maintains the right for access to the proposed nature preserve using a hiking/biking trail that will extend from Wright Woods Forest Preserve. The LCFPD reserves the right to route, construct, and maintain a bike trail extending from Wright Woods Forest Preserve along the northern right-of-way of Everett Road that borders the proposed Grainger Woods Nature Preserve.

It was moved by Rosenthal, seconded by Allread, and carried that the following resolution be adopted:

The Commission grants preliminary approval for dedication of Grainger Woods in Lake County as an Illinois nature preserve, as described in the proposal presented under Item 12 of the Agenda for the 203<sup>rd</sup> Meeting.

(Resolution 2047)

Tom Hahn stated that this was one of the LCFPD’s higher quality sites. As it went through the District’s internal process and with the Board of Commissioners, they were very enthusiastic that this site was going to be a dedicated nature preserve. The District is looking at the types of protection it puts on its property, and he stated that this site was a great example of what can be protected. He stated that it is hoped that the LCFPD will bring more sites to the INPC in the future.

Commissioner Allread stated that she felt the LCFPD was doing a phenomenal job, and she hoped that it will be a great example for other counties. The nature preserve designation is truly the best protection, and the LCFPD has the opportunity to be a leader in the State.

Mr. Hahn stated that once the Board saw the diversity and the importance of this site, they wanted to make it a nature preserve to permanently protect the site. There was a lot of discussion about the permanent protection because of the diversity of the members on the Board, but when they saw the sensitivity of this property, they decided to make the protection permanent.

203-13) Lake Co. B Buffer Addition to Lyons Prairie and Woods Nature Preserve, Dedication

Steven Byers presented a proposal on behalf of the LCFPD for preliminary approval for dedication of a 125-acre buffer addition to Lyons Prairie and Woods Nature Preserve, increasing the size of the Nature Preserve from 147 to 272 acres. The site is located within the Morainal Section of the Northeastern

Morainal Natural Division in Lake County. Lyons Prairie and Woods Nature Preserve and approximately the western half of the proposed addition lie within the Lyons Woods INAI (#1250). This site was originally identified by the INAI as “notable,” and then added as a Category II site for the presence of four state-listed plant species. One of these plant species has also been recognized as federally threatened. The proposed addition includes three grade C natural plant communities; dry-mesic upland forest, graminoid fen, and wet prairie; an old field community; and a tree plantation. The dry-mesic upland forest that extends from the existing nature preserve into the proposed nature preserve buffer addition was referred to during the original natural areas inventory as either “old second growth” or “mature second growth.” Lyons Prairie and Woods Nature Preserve and the proposed nature preserve buffer addition are located in the Illinois Beach – Chiwaukee Prairie Conservation Opportunity Area (COA) identified in the IWAP. Located atop the Zion City Moraine, this site represents the only protected part of the COA that is not part of the Zion Beach-ridge plain upon which Illinois Beach State Park and Spring Bluff Nature Preserve are located. Protection of this site is a priority for the Lake Michigan Action Plan recently adopted as an amendment to the Chicago Wilderness Biodiversity Recovery Plan.

Mr. Byers stated that the LCFPD reserves the right to continue adaptive management strategies at the proposed addition to Lyons Prairie and Woods Nature Preserve. The LCFPD also reserves the right to maintain the current rail system and to maintain the existing trail amenities. There is currently infrequent illegal access to the site by off-road vehicles, and the LCFPD reserves the right to erect or replace barriers, or fence the property. Mr. Byers stated that there is a small pond that borders the proposed buffer addition that the LCFPD may wish to remove in an effort to restore some of the natural hydrology.

It was moved by Schwegman, seconded by Drucker, and carried that the following resolution be adopted:

The Commission grants preliminary approval for dedication of a buffer addition to Lyons Prairie and Woods Nature Preserve in Lake County, as described in the proposal presented under Item 13 of the Agenda for the 203<sup>rd</sup> Meeting.

(Resolution 2048)

Tom Hahn stated that this site was located in an urbanized area. A survey was done by the LCFPD, and the top two items that people wanted to see were more trails and preservation and restoration of existing sites. He felt that this site has the trail component to bring more people to the site, and it preserves those resources long-term.

203-14) Lake Co. – Addition and Buffer Addition to Pistakee Bog Nature Preserve, Dedication

John Nelson presented a proposal on behalf of the IDNR for final dedication of four parcels of land comprising 50.32 acres as addition and buffer to Pistakee Bog Nature Preserve (10.23 acres as addition and 40.09 acres as buffer). Pistakee Bog is one of four wetland basins located within the Volo Bog State Natural Area. These wetland basins are Volo Bog, Pistakee Bog, Brandenburg Bog, and Lac Louette. The protection of these unique wetlands has long been a goal of the IDNR, the INPC, and The Nature Conservancy. Volo Bog was dedicated in 1970 as the 25<sup>th</sup> Illinois nature preserve. Pistakee Bog was

dedicated as a nature preserve in 1975 and now includes the wetland basin known as Brandenburg Bog. The Nature Preserve lies within the Morainal Section of the Northeastern Morainal Natural Division. Pistakee Bog Nature Preserve has nine natural communities providing habitat for 11 state-listed plant species. Protection and restoration of the proposed additions supports four action steps identified in the IWAP for the Prairie Campaign, Wetlands Campaign, Forests Campaign, and Invasive Species Campaign.

The Nature Preserve is currently 398.55 acres in size, and the IDNR owns and manages 373.13 of these acres. The remaining acreage is in two private ownerships as the Lindblom addition and Brandenburg Lake Island buffer addition to Pistakee Bog Nature Preserve (2.34 and 23.08 acres, respectively). With approval of this proposal, the total area of legally protected land at Pistakee Bog Nature Preserve will increase to 448.87 acres. The Commission conferred preliminary approval for dedication at its 202<sup>nd</sup> Meeting in May, 2009 (Resolution 2032).

Commissioner Ross-Shannon asked if this addition had any relationship to the threats that have developed recently in the area.

Mr. Nelson stated that this addition was related to a recent land acquisition of critical parcels along the northern portion of the Nature Preserve by the IDNR. This site was not a part of the industrial business park at Volo Bog.

It was moved by Ross-Shannon, seconded by Flemal, and carried that the following resolution be approved:

The Commission grants final approval dedication of an addition and buffer addition to Pistakee Bog Nature Preserve in Lake County, as described in the proposal presented under Item 14 of the Agenda for the 203<sup>rd</sup> Meeting.

(Resolution 2049)

203-15) Boone Co. – Kinnikinnick Creek Nature Preserve, Pine Plantation Removal Request

John Nelson presented a proposal on behalf of the Boone County Conservation District (BCCD) for approval to commercially harvest trees from within two pine plantations located along the boundary and partially within Kinnikinnick Creek Nature Preserve. Pine plantation #1 is 4.5 acres in size and consists of red pine (*Pinus resinosa*) trees that are 60+ years old. This plantation is targeted for a complete timber harvest. Pine plantation #2 is 8.2 acres in size and consists of a mixture of red and white pine trees (*Pinus strobus*) that are also approximately 60+ years old. The portion of pine plantation #2 outside of the nature preserve buffer would have a tree thinning harvest resulting in an approximate 40% reduction in trees with an emphasis on leaving larger white pines. The portion of pine plantation #2 which extends into nature preserve buffer would have all pine trees removed. A timber harvest company would harvest the pine trees for pulp and/or saw logs using tracked machinery during the winter months to minimize soil disturbance.

Any slash or other woody debris resulting from the timber harvesting operation would be burned on-site by BCCD staff. Areas that undergo complete tree removal would be restored to native oak-hickory woodland. Over time, oak and hickory trees would be planted on these sites by BCCD staff. The goal is to have these trees propagated by BCCD staff from seed collected on nature preserve grounds. This will ensure a local genotype is used. The funds acquired from the commercial timber harvest would be used to support management and restoration activities at the site and off set some of the costs associated with oak and hickory propagation.

Kelly Neal presented the staff opinion attached as Exhibit D. Ms. Neal stated that it has been established that staff need to seek Commission approval for this type of harvest where there will be profit from taking of the timber. As presented by Mr. Nelson, most of the work will be done outside of the buffer with only a small portion that is within the buffer. The area would be restored to a more presettlement condition, and all profit from the sale of the timber would be used for restoration in that area and also within the Nature Preserve. She stated that Commission staff recommended approval.

It was moved by Rosenthal, seconded by Keating, and carried, with Ross-Shannon abstaining, that the following resolution be approved:

The Commission grants approval for pine plantation removal at Kinnikinnick Creek Nature Preserve in Boone County, as described in the proposal presented under Item 15 of the Agenda for the 203<sup>rd</sup> Meeting.

(Resolution 2050)

203-16) Cook Co. – Gensburg-Markham Prairie Nature Preserve, Butterfly Translocation Request

Dr. Doug Taron, Chicago Academy of Sciences, gave a PowerPoint presentation for the translocation of the silver-bordered fritillary (*Boloria selene*) to Gensburg-Markham Prairie Nature Preserve. This butterfly is a circumpolar species whose range includes most of northern North America. The species is an uncommon butterfly in Illinois. It is largely confined to the northern half of the state and is restricted to higher quality prairie settings. Large populations exist at Goose Lake Prairie and the Iroquois County State Wildlife Area. Numerous small populations have been reported. These typically consist of very small numbers of individuals. The butterfly is found in wet-mesic to wet prairie settings, and it is likely that a combination of host plant availability, nectar source availability, and vegetation structure define the species' habitat. Plants in the genus *Viola* are the obligate larval hosts. The silver-bordered fritillary is not listed as endangered or threatened in Illinois, nor is it a candidate for listing at either the state or the federal level. The species is highly colonial throughout much of its range. This highly colonial nature, combined with a narrow range of host plants, has resulted in the species becoming rare in peripheral parts of its range or in disjunct populations. The Chicago Academy of Sciences proposes to reintroduce this species to Gensburg-Markham Prairie Nature Preserve. The silver-bordered fritillary was previously recorded at the site, but has not been found since 2000. The decline of the butterfly occurred during a time of degradation of the wet-mesic prairie plant community due to hydrologic alteration prior to 2000. A hydrology restoration project was begun in 1999 and by 2001, the water table had been restored and significant population increases of several *Viola* species resulted in the wet-mesic prairie areas preferred by this butterfly. Gravid females have

been collected from the Commonwealth Edison Prairie adjacent to Goose Lake Prairie State Park in Grundy County. They were taken to Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum where oviposition will occur. Larvae will be reared to pupation on cut leaves from host plants. Translocation is proposed for fall of 2009 with INPC approval. Genetic information is not available on either the donor population or the population that once occurred at Gensburg-Markham, but it is believed that the two locations are close enough to have allowed for at least some genetic flow. If translocated, the population will be monitored annually.

Kelly Neal presented the staff opinion attached as Exhibit E. Ms. Neal stated that the hydrology at the site had been negatively impacted, and it has been restored since 2004. The restoration of the hydrology has allowed populations of the *Viola* to become established. The species had occurred at the site in the past, but has not been observed since 2000. The species is becoming rare in Illinois. There was no information on genetics, but it was probable that there would be stepping stone populations between Gensburg-Markham and the Goose Lake Prairie populations. She stated that Commission staff recommended approval for the translocation of the silver-bordered fritillary to Gensburg-Markham Prairie Nature Preserve.

Commissioner Keating thanked Dr. Taron and his co-workers, along with Ms. Neal, for their analysis. He felt that there was a high standard of technical excellence and good rationale.

It was moved by Rosenthal, seconded by Keating, and carried, with Allread and Drucker abstaining, that the following resolution be approved:

The Commission grants approval for the request for the translocation of the silver-bordered fritillary to Gensburg-Markham Prairie Nature Preserve in Cook County, as described in the proposal presented under Item 16 of the Agenda for the 203<sup>rd</sup> Meeting.

(Resolution 2051)

Commissioner Ross-Shannon asked when the translocation would begin.

Dr. Taron stated that the translocation would begin within the next couple of weeks.

Chair Riddell thanked Dr. Taron and Mr. Olivares for their efforts on butterfly conservation and improving the fauna at Gensburg-Markham Prairie Nature Preserve.

203-17) Lake Co. – Edward L. Ryerson Nature Preserve, Dam Removal Request

Jim Anderson, LCFPD, gave a PowerPoint presentation for a dam removal (3 feet high x 97 feet long) on the Des Plaines River adjacent to the Edward L. Ryerson Nature Preserve to enhance habitat, stabilize the river section, improve navigability, and reconnect and increase genetic flow. This proposal supports a regional effort in northeastern Illinois to remove dams to restore fragmented river segments into healthy ecosystems that allow fish access, stabilize eroding streambanks, and deter sediment collection. The 288.23-acre site, dedicated on April 27, 1972, contains high-quality floodplain and upland forest

communities, which harbor eight state-listed species (INAI #0115). A draft Master Plan dated January, 1988 for the site states, "Construction of the dam in 1957...altered the flow pattern of the river by increasing bank overflow upstream." Engineering studies conducted on behalf of LCFPD show that the dam now has little impact on the river due to a six-foot gap between the sheet pile dam and the bank caused by erosion. Modeling has shown that eliminating the dam will lower the surface level of the water approximately four inches in the vicinity of the Nature Preserve. Mr. Anderson stated that the dam will be cut off at the substrate, and the grade will be brought back up. All staging of heavy equipment will occur across the river adjacent to the Nature Preserve on property owned by the LCFPD, thereby avoiding direct impacts to the Nature Preserve during dam removal. The INPC staff will review final plans prior to project implementation.

Mr. Anderson stated that the LCFPD Board has moved this project forward to the permit level. It was anticipated that the review process would take three to six months, and construction should begin in late 2010 or early 2011. He stated that the US Army Corps of Engineers, as part of its phase two upper Des Plaines flood reduction, had identified removing these low head dams on the Des Plaines River as a method to provide some extra storage in the system. The LCFPD has two other dams that are on the Des Plaines River. One is across the street from MacArthur Woods Nature Preserve, and this will be a good training process for them to think about the next two dams. Removal of these dams will open the Des Plaines River all the way through Lake County.

Chair Riddell stated that she was pleased that the LCFPD had taken the initiative to do the detailed hydrological study and implemented the plans for protection of natural resources. She thanked Mr. Anderson for bringing this information before the Commission.

Mr. Anderson stated that, with the bond referendum that was passed last year, the LCFPD has set aside \$3 million for the southeastern Lake County nature preserves. Recently, the LCFPD has done some trail modification to recreate the hydrology coming to the flatwoods at Edward L. Ryerson Nature Preserve. The dam removal project would not impact the flatwoods. Within the next two or three years, the LCFPD plans to restore the hydrology to the whole site and do some restoration.

Jenny Skufca presented the staff opinion attached as Exhibit F. Ms. Skufca stated that, for the record, there were two corrections to the agenda paragraph for this project. It was stated in the agenda paragraph that the dam removal would improve the local community's drinking water and lower filtration costs. Although this was true for dam removal projects in general, it was not true for this particular one because the communities receive their drinking water from Lake Michigan. Secondly it was stated that due to the limited topographical relief, the Nature Preserve would be vulnerable to hydrological variation for the rare flatwoods community. This statement was also incorrect. The flatwoods are an uplands community at this site, and they would not be affected by this project. She stated that the agenda paragraphs are written much before the necessary research and interviews have occurred. She apologized for any confusion that this might have caused. The staff opinion that was given to each Commissioner reflected those corrections.

Ms. Skufca stated that staff recommended approval of the LCFPD's request to remove the dam adjacent to Edward L. Ryerson Nature Preserve. The removal of this fixed height dam has been studied and

modeled to the extent that natural resource managers are able to conclude that in its present state it has little impact to river flow or surface level due to its disrepair, however, its removal will have great impact in terms of habitat improvement, river stabilization, navigability improvement for recreationalists, and genetic flow reconnection. Additionally, the proposed phased approach will reduce the inevitable sediment loading down stream. Staff believed that the removal of the dam would improve the natural features of the Nature Preserve, and if approved, the Commission's contribution to the national, and even international effort, to remove dams and restore prime habitats could not be overstated.

It was moved by Allread, seconded by Rosenthal, and carried that the following resolution be approved:

The Commission grants approval for the dam removal at Edward L. Ryerson Nature Preserve in Lake County, as described in the proposal presented under Item 17 of the Agenda for the 203<sup>rd</sup> Meeting.

(Resolution 2052)

Commissioner Ross-Shannon asked if the Commission should have a general policy on dam removal if this type of request will come up enough times in the foreseeable future.

Randy Heidorn stated that the Commission has operated under a resolution from a number of years ago that if an item like this was approved three times, and there was no specific prohibition for using this policy, it then became a staff decision. When the third dam removal request has been approved, the staff would then be able to make those decisions.

A lunch break was taken from 12:25 p.m. – 1:10 p.m.

203-18) Rock Island Co. – Black Hawk Forest Nature Preserve, Request to Reconstruct Existing Foreslopes and Extend Drainage Pipes

Dr. Cassandra Rogers, Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), gave a PowerPoint presentation for emergency road work to correct the eventual collapse of Illinois Route 5 adjacent to and within Black Hawk Forest Nature Preserve by reconstructing side slopes and replacing and extending three culverts. The 106-acre Nature Preserve, owned by the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency (IHPA), was recognized for its high-quality forest communities (INAI #0140). The work would address severe erosion issues at the site (0.306 acre within the Nature Preserve boundary) and protect the health and safety of travelers along this route. Prior, and less invasive, emergency road repairs at the site along Illinois Route 5 were approved in 2004 at the INPC staff level. The IDOT and the INPC staff now have concerns that the damage is becoming much worse and more quickly, and are therefore proposing this project on a larger scale to attempt to ameliorate future road repair emergencies. Existing pipes are in poor condition and threaten to undermine the roadway if not replaced. The forest community on the existing foreslope which will be impacted within the Nature Preserve is highly degraded. A total of 44 trees would be removed and replaced at project completion at a one-to-one ratio with desirable native species recommended by the INPC staff. The IDOT has attempted to avoid or satisfactorily mitigate any adverse impacts to the Nature



Preserve. The IHPA and the INPC will have the opportunity to review and approve the final plans before the proposed improvement is implemented.

Becky Marruffo, IDOT, outlined the commitments from IDOT. She stated that IDOT would extend the pipes using a “stair step” effect to reduce impacts; align pipe 3 to avoid impacting mature oak trees to the west; extend slopes for stabilization but avoid alteration to the stream flow; place rip rap at the bottom of the slope, sides, and bottom of the bank for stability; use Turf Reinforcement Mat for soil stabilization; the use of earthen fill to adjust the foreslopes would be inspected by the INPC staff; impacted area would be seeded with prairie grass seeding mix; all trees (44 trees estimated) impacted by the project construction would be replaced at a one-to-one ratio; snow fencing or similar material would be installed along the proposed construction limits; tree trunk protection would be installed on any tree within ten feet of construction limits; four trees near the construction limits would be saved; and part of the foreslopes between pipes 1 and 2 would remain in place as they are already stable at a one-to-two slope.

Jenny Skufca presented the staff opinion, and the staff opinion is attached as Exhibit G. She stated that staff recommended approval of the IDOT’s request to perform preventative road work to correct the eventual collapse of Illinois Route 5 at Black Hawk Forest Nature Preserve. The 2006 road repairs performed on an emergency basis were only a precursor to further road infrastructure damage and embankment destabilization at this site. The IDOT’s planning phase has occurred in close consultation with Angella Moorehouse and other INPC staff. Full cooperation has been afforded the INPC on all suggested alterations to minimize or to satisfactorily mitigate adverse impacts. Staff believes that the proposed drainage pipe repairs and foreslope reconstruction would avert an inevitable emergency.

Commissioner Keating stated that based on past experience, inter-agency cooperation was not always a given. He stated that he was happy to see that the staff from IDOT was working so closely with the staff of the INPC.

Commissioner Ross-Shannon stated that he would also like to comment on the cooperation between the agencies. He stated that the cooperation has been good, and these types of issues are resolved in a timely manner.

Chair Riddell asked if there were any alternatives to using rip rap.

Bill McWethy, IDOT, stated that there are some other materials that are used to prevent erosion, but the other alternatives are not suited to this situation.

Commissioner Allread stated that this Commission is very protective of the nature preserves, but when someone comes with a very thoughtful and planned out proposal that has involved the staff, it is a win-win situation. Not only does it address the problem of a public safety issue, it also addresses some of the challenges to the Nature Preserve. She stated that the time that went into the planning process for this project was much appreciated.

It was moved by Ross-Shannon, seconded by Allread, and carried that the following resolution be approved:

The Commission grants approval for the reconstruction of existing foreslopes and extension of drainage pipes at Black Hawk Forest Nature Preserve in Rock Island County subject to the commitments made by the Illinois Department of Transportation, as described in the proposal presented under Item 18 of the Agenda for the 203<sup>rd</sup> Meeting.

(Resolution 2053)

Bob Weichert, IHPA, stated that their staff had reviewed this request, and they agreed with the Commission's decision to proceed with this project.

Dr. Rogers thanked Angella Moorehouse for her hard work on this project.

203-19) Will Co. – O'Hara Woods Nature Preserve, Bicycle Trail Placement Request

Robert Ijams, Hitchcock Design Group, gave a PowerPoint presentation on behalf of the Village of Romeoville for the construction of a bicycle trail through the northern edge of O'Hara Woods Nature Preserve. The bicycle trail will link to the regional Commonwealth Edison Corridor Trail, trails associated with the Village's nearby recreation center, and future neighborhood trails. Half of the proposed trail will be aligned on an existing sewer line which is currently a gravel road used for maintenance vehicles. The other half of the trail will be constructed in open, degraded habitat as northerly as possible without encroaching on a US Army Corps of Engineers' wetland mitigation area. O'Hara Woods Nature Preserve, owned by the Village of Romeoville, was dedicated as an Illinois nature preserve in 1982. Seventy acres are dedicated nature preserve, and 10 acres are dedicated nature preserve buffer. The site is known as a high-quality prairie grove that historically provided habitat for the endangered Canada violet (*Viola canadensis*). The site is managed by the Village of Romeoville's Parks and Recreation Department. The Village has concentrated its management activities on public use, not the stewardship of natural communities. Although bicycle riding at this site was never considered an allowable use at the time of dedication, nor was it ever approved in the site's master plan or management schedule, the urban site has had a history of bicycle use. After the site became a nature preserve, unauthorized bicycle use continued due to proximity to recreational facilities and nearby bike trails. It is intended that the installation of a trail will focus cyclists to one area authorized for this activity. This proposal includes the deterrence of unauthorized uses by installing bollards, signs, bicycle racks, and split rail fencing in key areas. In addition to the trail installation and extension, a joint management partnership between the Village of Romeoville and the Forest Preserve District of Will County (FPDWC) will result in an improvement of natural conditions within the Nature Preserve and enhanced upkeep of the bicycle trail which will enter the adjacent property, a recent acquisition by the FPDWC and a future proposal for Nature Preserve addition.

Jenny Skufca presented the staff opinion attached as Exhibit H. She stated that was another example of local INPC staff working in close consultation with the landowner to request a change to the management plan that both supports protection and heads toward appropriate use of a site. She stated that INPC staff

believed that bicycle riding on an established and regulated trail system should be an allowable use at this urban site. This trail linkage to regional neighborhood trails enhances the opportunity for creating awareness among users about the Commission's protection mission through an increased use of signs and barriers. Developing a partnership with the FPDWC, a proven leader in natural area stewardship, will improve the management of the Nature Preserve's highest quality areas. Staff recommended that approval be granted for the establishment of a bicycle trail at O'Hara Woods Nature Preserve contingent upon enforcement of no further expansion of unauthorized trail use within the Nature Preserve.

Commissioner Rosenthal asked if bicycle use would be an allowable activity if this site were dedicated now.

Kim Roman stated that if this were a new site the landowner would be able to reserve the right to allow bicycle use with the nature preserve.

Chair Riddell asked if there was frequent intrusion of bicycles into the Nature Preserve.

Ms. Roman stated that the intrusion of bicycles into the Nature Preserve has been a problem in the past. This activity has slowed somewhat, but it does still occur.

Commissioner Allread stated that it was her hope that signs would be used to inform the public of the value of the rare protected area. She stated that she felt that it was important to use this as an educational tool.

Commissioner Ross-Shannon asked if the construction would be done while staying on the original pathway.

Mr. Ijams stated that the construction of the asphalt trail should be able to be done directly on the existing gravel base to limit the impacts to the Nature Preserve.

Randy Heidorn stated that this addresses an ongoing illegal access issue at the site that has been a problem since the site was dedicated. This proposal addresses how to keep bicycles in approved areas and keeps them out of other parts of the Nature Preserve.

It was moved by Ross-Shannon, seconded by Flemal, and carried that the following resolution be adopted:

The Commission approves the request by the Village of Romeoville for the bicycle trail placement at O'Hara Woods Nature Preserve contingent upon no further expansion of unauthorized trail use as presented under Item 19 of the Agenda for the 203<sup>rd</sup> Meeting.

(Resolution 2054)

203-20) Election of Officers – INPC Nominating Committee Report

Commissioner Ross-Shannon stated that the nominating Committee was pleased to offer in nomination the following individuals: for Chair, Commissioner Riddell; Vice-Chair, Commissioner Rosenthal; and for Secretary, Commissioner Payne.

There were no other nominations from the floor.

It was moved by Drucker, seconded by Allread, and carried that the following Commissioners be elected as Officers of the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission: Jill Riddell as Chair, Lauren Rosenthal as Vice-Chair, and Mare Payne as Secretary.

Commissioner Ross-Shannon thanked Commissioner Keating for his past service as Secretary of the INPC.

203-21) Public Comment Period

Bob Soderholm stated that he talked with John Nelson at the Commission meeting held in Sparta last year. Subsequent to that, he and his wife purchased adjacent property to their existing land in Ogle County, and Mr. Nelson came to the property and walked the site. He stated that Mr. Nelson gave them some ideas, and it was hoped they would be able to do something in the future to protect that land. Currently, 40 acres of their property is being farmed. After talking with the farmer, they discussed the efficacy of purchasing an additional 80 acres to their west which adjoins White Pines State Park. He stated that the farmer encouraged him to purchase the land since the opportunity only becomes available once in a lifetime. He stated that this Commission meeting has dealt with the protection of land in Lake County and McHenry County. He stated that 150 years ago Daniel Burnham and others had the foresight to set aside approximately 350,000 acres which is now termed the Chicago Wilderness, and he thanked them for their efforts. He grew up in the State of Oregon, and 52% of that State is federally property. He stated that there has been extreme urbanization in the collar counties of northern Illinois, and land does not come up for sale very often. He stated that he was approached a week and a half ago by a family that wanted to know if he would be interested in purchasing a piece of land in Pine Creek Township. He said he thought the land, located east of White Pines State Park, was native, undeveloped oak savanna and approximately 160 acres in size. He stated that he was looking for ideas to find available funding to purchase this property for conservation. The land is currently zoned for commercial use, and he was afraid it would get purchased for development. He stated that he would provide his contact information to anyone who is interested.

Chair Riddell thanked Mr. Soderholm for his comments and his dedication to nature and conservation.

203-22) Other Business

Chair Riddell stated that five sets of minutes from closed meetings of the Commission were included in the Commissioners' packets. The meeting dates were August 2, 2005, May 2, 2006, May 6, 2008, October 28, 2008, and May 5, 2009. These meetings, with the exception of the August 28, 2008, were closed in accordance with the Open Meetings Act to discuss the purchase of real property. The minutes from the October 28, 2008, closed session was closed in accordance with the Open Meetings Act to discuss

litigation. Section 2.06 of the Open Meetings Act provides that public bodies, “shall periodically, but no less than semi-annually, meet to review minutes of all closed sessions. At such meetings, a determination shall be made and reported in an open session that: 1. the need for confidentiality still exists as to all or part of those minutes, or 2. that the minutes or portions thereof no longer require confidential treatment and are available for public inspection.” She asked for a motion to determine whether or not the minutes from each meeting should be kept closed.

It was moved by Ross-Shannon, seconded by Flemal, and carried that the following resolution be adopted:

In accordance with the Open Meetings Act, the closed session minutes from the August 2, 2005, May 2, 2006, May 6, 2008, and May 5, 2009, meetings will remain confidential but will be reviewed semi-annually to ascertain the need to be kept confidential. The minutes from the October 28, 2008, meeting have been determined to no longer be confidential.

(Resolution 2055)

203-23) Adjournment

It was moved by Rosenthal, seconded by Keating, and carried that the meeting be adjourned at 2:10 p.m.

Illinois Nature Preserves Commission  
One Natural Resources Way  
Springfield, IL 62702  
217/785-8686

# Exhibit A



**Illinois  
Nature  
Preserves  
Commission**

# memorandum

Exhibit A

**To:** Commissioners  
**From:** Kelly Neal, Jenny Skufca, and Randy Heidorn  
**Date:** September 11, 2009  
**Subject:** Staff Report for the 203<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission

**I. Illinois Nature Preserves Commission (INPC) Operations:**

- A. Jenny Skufca continued coordination on promotion, budget, and photo preparation planning for the *Outdoor Illinois* photo contest in the INPC category.
- B. Steven Byers and Bob Edgin conducted exit reviews for graduate resident interns, Jason Inczauskis and Samantha Adams.
- C. Randy Heidorn, Tom Lerczak, and Kim Roman prepared for new graduate resident interns by:
  - 1. Participating in interviews for newly hired residents.
  - 2. Providing information on the 2009-2010 resident program to university graduate biology departments.
  - 3. Compiling a detailed list of activities/duties/responsibilities for incoming Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) 2009-2010 residents who will begin working on September 16, 2009.
- D. Staff compiled fiscal year (FY) 2010 budget requests.
- E. Mary Kay Solecki reviewed all protection proposals, nature preserve (NP) documents and land and water reserve (LWR) documents for the 203<sup>rd</sup> INPC meeting.

**II. Training, Presentations, and Meetings Attended:**

- A. Staff completed the State of Illinois ethics training.
- B. Kelly Neal, Jenny Skufca, John Nelson, Kim Roman, and Debbie Newman worked in the Heritage Tent at the State Fair.
- C. Jenny Skufca attended the Third Annual Advancing Wind Power in Illinois two-day conference in Bloomington.
- D. Randy Heidorn, Kelly Neal, John Nelson, Angella Moorehouse, Tom Lerczak, Mary Kay Solecki, and Bob Edgin completed Hazardous Materials Training with the IDNR.
- E. Jenny Skufca, Kelly Neal, and Division of Natural Heritage staff participated in a nationwide conference call with NatureServe to discuss how each state is altering its natural areas program priorities in response to climate change.
- F. Randy Heidorn and Debbie Newman participated in a ceremony at the State Fair for Volunteer of the Year Award presented to Clifftop. The group was nominated by the Natural Heritage Biologist and Debbie Newman.
- G. Randy Heidorn, Kelly Neal, John Nelson, and Steven Byers attended the Illinois Prescribed Fire Council Symposium in Chicago. Mr. Heidorn gave a presentation on the Illinois Prescribed Fire Act, and he was re-elected Treasurer of the Illinois Prescribed Fire Council.
- H. Judy Faulkner Dempsey and Randy Heidorn attended an Illinois State Water Survey Meeting in Champaign to learn the latest research results on details of reconnection of the Upper and Lower Cache River.
- I. John Nelson:
  - 1. Was the guest speaker at the annual meeting of the Jane Adamsland Parks Foundation, Freeport.
  - 2. Assisted the Land Conservancy of McHenry County in the Project Quercus in-class training workshop.
- J. Steven Byers attended a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) Climate Change workshop.
- K. Kim Roman attended The Nature Conservancy's (TNC) Spring on the Savanna event, touring the Carl N. Becker Savanna NP with the Becker family.
- L. Angella Moorehouse worked with the Quad Cities Prescribed Fire Coalition, Quad Cities Natural Area Guardians, Rock Island County Soil and Water Conservation District and the IDNR to organize and plan

NWCG Wildland Fire Training (S130/190, L180) to be hosted at Black Hawk State Historic Site, Rock Island, November 2-5, 2009.

- M. Mary Kay Solecki presented exotic species identification training at an east-central Illinois Master Naturalists/Stewardship Training Workshop.
- N. Debbie Newman:
  - 1. Co-hosted a registration ceremony for an addition to Salt Lick Point LWR.
  - 2. Hosted a picnic for 26 volunteers who assisted with prescribed burns in 2009.
  - 3. Wrote a feature article about Salt Lick Point LWR for *Illinois Audubon* magazine.
  - 4. Gave a presentation on Threatened and Endangered Species of southwestern Illinois at Kaskaskia Valley Audubon's annual Nature Festival.
  - 5. Led field trips for the Festival of the Bluffs near Fults Hill Prairie NP.
  - 6. Assisted with a program on timber rattlesnakes hosted by Clifftop.
- O. Bob Edgin gave a presentation entitled "Lake Sara Flatwoods Its History and Significance" to the Lake Sara Good Neighbors Association.
- P. Judy Faulkner Dempsey:
  - 1. Attended monthly meetings on planning the event "Celebrating 30 Years of Conservation in the Cache." The event date is October 10, 2009.
  - 2. Gave a presentation to Shawnee Sierra Club on the process of dedicating a nature preserve, using the example of the dedication of Faulkner-Franke Pioneer Railroad Prairie NP.

### III. Inventory and Monitoring:

- A. Randy Heidorn, Kelly Neal, and Jenny Skufca attended the Natural Areas Evaluation Committee Meeting.
- B. Kelly Neal and Randy Heidorn met with Illinois Natural Areas Inventory (INAI) update staff to determine ways to stream-line permit processing and landowner contact for work at INPC sites. Staff provided landowner contact information to INAI update staff.
- C. John Nelson
  - 1. With Bob Szafoni coordinated a mussel survey of the lower Kishwaukee River Basin. Other participants included staff from the Natural Land Institute (NLI), Rockford Park District, Boone County Conservation District (BCCD), Winnebago Forest Preserve District, and two private landowners. The survey will result in an INAI nomination of new stream segments as Category VI – for high diversity mussel fauna.
  - 2. Reviewed a final report submitted by Iowa State University for a Blanding's turtle genetics and nesting study conducted at Exner Marsh NP, McHenry County. This nest monitoring and genetics work was funded as condition of a wetland fill permit for the Lake Point Development next to Exner Marsh NP.
- D. Kim Roman and Mary Kay Solecki conducted endangered plant surveys at Sweet Fern Savanna LWR.
- E. Kim Roman:
  - 1. Conducted Blanding's turtle surveys at Goose Lake Prairie NP.
  - 2. Conducted wetland bird surveys at McGinnis Slough, Hegewisch Marsh, Eggers Marsh, and Burhnam Prairie.
  - 3. Assisted TNC with its environmental assessments on several parcels in the Kankakee Sands becoming available at an annual tax auction.
  - 4. Met with TNC and INAI update staff to discuss inventorying sites in the Kankakee Sands.
  - 5. Assisted INAI update staff with data collection at one potential INAI site in the Kankakee Sands.
- F. Angella Moorehouse:
  - 1. Continued to monitor the success of the translocation of 50 state-endangered queen of the prairie (*Filipendula rubra*) plants threatened by road repair work. The plants were moved with the assistance of Illinois Natural History Survey and Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) staff in May, 2009 from Lost Grove Wetland INAI to Short Fork Seep NP. As of July, 2009 at least 30 reintroduced plants were still thriving, and several were flowering.
  - 2. Worked with Augustana College as part of a Wildlife Preservation Fund (WPF) grant to search for new locations and to monitor populations of rare plants on hill prairies including: prairie larkspur (*Delphinium carolinianum*), stickleaf (*Mentzelia oligosperma*) and narrow-leaved green milkweed (*Asclepias stenophylla*).
- G. Tom Lerczak:



1. Completed baseline bird surveys at Rock Springs Center and Independence Park.
  2. Completed a U.S. Geological Survey's Breeding Bird Survey Route #71 for the 16th year.
  3. Continued the survey of dog activity and evaluation of the dog policy (i.e., leashed dogs allowed on trails) at Carpenter Park NP.
- H. Mary Kay Solecki
1. Assisted the Champaign County Forest Preserve District staff with the inventory of high-quality forest near Salt Fork of Vermilion River INAI site.
  2. Assisted IDNR staff with mussel surveys at several stations on the Sangamon River and the North Fork of the Vermilion River.
- I. Debbie Newman:
1. Conducted an annual Breeding Bird Survey route.
  2. Monitored endangered plants at six sites.
- J. Bob Edgin:
1. Conducted royal catchfly (*Silene regia*) monitoring at five sites in Lawrence County.
  2. Evaluated and nominated two sites for addition to the INAI.
  3. Recommended deletion of Grandville Woods from the INAI following a heavy timber harvest.
  4. Assisted the INAI update staff with site evaluations in Saline County.
  5. Reviewed the draft description of the new Woodland category proposed for the INAI.
- K. Judy Faulkner Dempsey met with INAI update staff for a field visit in Jackson County to determine the quality of the woods.

#### **IV. Protection Program:**

- A. Staff met with landowners and managers to plan and draft protection proposal that are on the agenda of the 203<sup>rd</sup> meeting.
- B. John Nelson:
1. Participated in a Boone Creek Headwaters Planning meeting hosted by the McHenry County Conservation District (MCCD).
  2. Wrote, and submitted for consideration, two Natural Heritage Landmark (NHL) documents for landowners in the Boone Creek Fen and Seep INAI site, McHenry County.
  3. Evaluated a land parcel at Apple River Canyon to determine eligibility for inclusion in INPC programs. This land protection effort is a NLI initiative involving the IDNR, INPC, and the Blackhawk Area Council, Boy Scouts of America.
  4. Met with landowners of a parcel in the Boone Creek Fen and Seep INAI that was granted preliminary approval for dedication in 2005.
  5. Began writing dedication proposals for "Yonder Prairie," a site owned by the Land Conservancy of McHenry County and the City of Woodstock.
- C. Steven Byers:
1. Met with Don Reed, Southeast Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, and Tammy Ryan, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, regarding the proposed U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Refuge.
  2. Had discussions with the MCCD, associated Villages, and McHenry County regarding protection of HUM Railroad Prairies.
  3. Had meetings/discussions with Fields of Cambridge Homeowner's Association, Tallgrass Restoration, and USFWS to protect a site as an Illinois NP.
  4. Participated in Lake County "visioning" with the Liberty Prairie Conservancy to establish a vision and goals for protected landscapes in Lake County.
  5. Participated with the Liberty Prairie Conservancy in a landowner outreach meeting for landowners near Red Wing Slough/Deer Lake LWR. The IDNR and the Lake County Forest Preserve District also participated.
- D. Kim Roman:
1. Contacted four landowners in the Kankakee Sands Area regarding the inclusion of their land in INPC programs.
  2. Visited a Will County wetland to determine its eligibility for inclusion in INPC programs.

- E. Angella Moorehouse evaluated two privately owned sites in Brown County to determine eligibility for INPC programs.
- F. Tom Lerczak initiated or renewed four landowner contacts of unprotected natural areas or areas for potential inclusion in INPC programs .
- G. Mary Kay Solecki:
  - 1. Led a Grand Prairie Friend's (GPF) conservation plan committee and co-wrote a Strategic Conservation Plan for Evaluating and Selecting Conservation Projects for the GPF that was adopted by the GPF to guide future conservation project selection.
  - 2. Represented INPC interests at a meeting of the Vermilion River Conservation Opportunity Area (COA) stakeholders.
  - 3. Attended a Land Conservation Foundation Board meeting and assisted with protection projects on a Sangamon River INAI site.
- H. Debbie Newman met with owners of four INAI sites within INPC programs .
- I. Bob Edgin:
  - 1. Initiated three landowner contacts of unprotected INAI sites for enrollment in INPC programs.
  - 2. At the landowner's request, evaluated one non-INAI site for suitability for enrollment in INPC programs.
- J. Judy Faulkner Dempsey:
  - 1. Made two landowner contacts.
  - 2. Organized support from regulatory personnel in the IDNR to assist Lafarge in obtaining a ruling favorable to using NP dedication as future mitigation a for mining project.

#### V. Land Acquisition

- A. John Nelson provided input to IDNR's Office of Realty and Environmental Planning on two land parcels offered for sale near Black-Crown Marsh LWR and Apple River Canyon State Park (SP).
- B. Kim Roman contacted two landowners regarding the sale of lots adjacent to Sweet Fern Savanna LWR.
- C. Mary Kay Solecki assisted the Champaign County Forest Preserve District with potential acquisition of high-quality forest near Salt Fork of Vermilion River INAI site.

#### VI. Defense Program:

- A. Randy Heidorn and Jenny Skufca attended update meetings addressing asbestos containing material (ACM) and other issues related to the management of Illinois Beach SP, including Illinois Beach NP and North Dunes NP.
- B. Jenny Skufca:
  - 1. Responded to five reviews for the IDNR's Comprehensive Environmental Review Program (CERP) and 25 reviews for the IDNR's consultation program.
  - 2. Created a poster describing the high-quality natural features of Illinois Beach SP. The IDNR displayed this poster at a public availability session to highlight the recent release of the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry report regarding the ACM issue.
  - 3. Attended a meeting with British Petroleum Wind Energy staff to discuss potential effects of proposed wind turbines near Sibley Grove NP.
  - 4. Reviewed wind ordinances submitted by three counties to IDNR's consultation staff – Macon, Winnebago, and Champaign counties.
  - 5. Submitted Class III Groundwater Petition packets for nine NPs to the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA): Armin Krueger Speleological Area NP, Bluff Spring Fen NP, Braidwood Dunes and Savanna NP, Elizabeth Lake NP, Illinois Beach NP, Lake in the Hills Fen NP, Lockport Prairie NP, Romeoville Prairie NP, and Volo Bog NP.
  - 6. Has been in the process of preparing Class III Groundwater Petition packets for three NPs to the IEPA: George B. Fell NP, Goose Lake Prairie NP, and Spring Grove Fen NP.
- C. Bob Edgin attended meetings and assisted with damage assessment and mapping of a portion of Dismal Creek Savanna INAI site that was sprayed by IDOT personnel. The investigation continues.
- D. Threats to sites within INPC programs:
  - 1. **Black-Crown Marsh LWR, McHenry-Lake counties – John Nelson**

- a. Issue: The Village of Lakemoor is converting a building adjacent to the LWR into a public works facility.
  - b. Threat: Main issue is the storage of road salt adjacent to the LWR and other wetlands located downstream at Moraine Hills SP.
  - c. Status: Final engineering plans have been received, and the IDNR consultation has been closed. A new salt storage facility will be constructed and maintained along Wegner Road at the same location, but furthest from the marsh.
2. **Volo Bog State Natural Area (SNA) and Volo Bog NP, Lake County – John Nelson**
  - a. Issue: The proposed Spruce Lake Industrial Park is being considered for final engineering approval by the Village of Volo.
  - b. Threat: Concerns that the industrial park will have negative impacts on the hydrology of the bog.
  - c. Status: INPC and IDNR staff reviewed a hydrologic report received June 30, 2009. INPC and IDNR staff submitted comments on the report in a letter to the Village of Volo and documented areas of disagreement. The IDNR has terminated consultation. The development is now approved by the Village of Volo. The IDNR and the INPC will monitor compliance with all conditions imposed to help protect Volo Bog SNA.
3. **Lake in the Hills Fen NP, McHenry County – John Nelson**
  - a. Issue: On March 25, 2009, a wildfire occurred at Lake in the Hills (LITH) Fen NP.
  - b. Threat: The LITH-Algonquin Fire Protection District (FPD) responded by entering the NP with brush trucks that got stuck in hydric soils. A Bobcat skidsteer was called on-site to extract vehicles, and it also got stuck.
  - c. Status: INPC staff met with LITH-Algonquin FPD staff on August 27, 2009, to discuss wildland fire certification and training. The FPD is committed to hosting a training course offered by the Illinois Fire Service Institute (IFSI). Equipment and certification in the Wildland Fire course will best prepare the FPD to better respond to the next wildfire at the NP. Training is pending the approval of a grant between the IDNR and the IFSI.
4. **Julia M. & Royce L. Parker Fen NP, McHenry County – John Nelson**
  - a. Issue: Proposed construction and operation of the Resurrection Center Retirement Community on nearby uplands.
  - b. Threat: Potential groundwater impacts within a Class III Ground Watershed designated for the NP has been the main concern for the INPC.
  - c. Status: The McHenry County Board approved the proposed retirement community with a vote of 17 to 6 on June 22, 2009. Thirty conditions were imposed on the development, many of which were related to environmental protections. The INPC was listed as a natural resource agency that should review the woodland and wetland restoration plan for the site. These planning efforts are now underway. The INPC received some letters and calls from neighbors who were opposed to this development and who lobbied for a stronger “no development” position.
5. **Bluff Spring Fen NP, Cook County – John Nelson, Stevonn Byers**
  - a. Issue: Routing of water from Gifford Lake and “finger lakes” located adjacent to Bluff Spring Fen is currently under consideration by the Forest Preserve District of Cook County (FPDCC). Options include surface conveyance of water from Gifford Lake or conveyance of the water via a pipe.
  - b. Threat: INPC groundwater consultants Randy Locke and Jim Miner, Illinois State Geological Survey, have both recommended the “piping” alternative. The open swale alternative threatens groundwater chemistry and a previously permitted project to restore surface and groundwater hydrology (and fen wetlands) by filling a shallow gravel pit lake.
  - c. Status: Two conference calls took place in June and July, 2009, to discuss the methods and data needed to update a groundwater model. The first version of the model was completed in 2005, but since that time, new groundwater monitoring data, restoration work, and flooding issues prompted a need to revise the original model to better reflect actual conditions observed. Bluff City Materials and Vulcan Materials agreed to move forward with the groundwater model update. This effort is nearly complete at this time.
6. **Gladstone Fen NP, McHenry County – John Nelson**
  - a. Issue: Proposed residential subdivision on land adjacent to the NP.

- b. Threat: Close proximity to the NP could have impacts to the groundwater resource that sustains the high quality fen wetland and sedge meadow at the NP. The development property is 58 acres in size and is currently zoned for seven home parcels. The subdivision plan calls for 13 homesites with a conservation area adjoining the NP.
  - c. Status: On August 24, 2009, INPC staff attended a public hearing at the Village of Bull Valley and spoke on behalf of Lorna Gladstone and the INPC. The developers, Raj and Preeti Vemuri, met at the NP the following week with INPC staff and Lorna Gladstone. An IDNR consultation is open. The groundwater contribution area to Gladstone Fen has not been defined by a Class III Groundwater petition, but that effort is underway.
- 7. **Flora Prairie NP, Boone County – John Nelson**
  - a. Issue: The Flora Township Road Commissioner cleared and removed portions of relict prairie vegetation from within the NP on April 29, 2009. Work was performed along the road right-of-way (ROW). According to the BCCD, the NP boundary extends to the center of road and precludes the authority of the Township to conduct earth moving activities.
  - b. Threat: Direct impacts to the dry dolomite prairie that cannot be restored.
  - c. Status: Met with the Township Road Commissioner on May 4, 2009. A police report has been obtained by the BCCD. INPC staff and Dan Kane, BCCD, met with the Boone County State's Attorney, Michelle Courier, on July 28, 2009, to discuss potential legal action. The State's Attorney has contacted Flora Township to discuss the matter further. The Township insists it has the legal authority to maintain the road ROW as it has easement rights. Ms. Courier requested documentation of such rights.
- 8. **Palatine Prairie NP, Cook County – Steven Byers, Jenny Skufca**
  - a. Issue: A private firm (Golf Nation) erected a structure (with netting) in 2007 to support a golf driving range. The ground wires that support the structure intrude into the NP.
  - b. Threat: Unauthorized intrusion into an Illinois NP. The NP owner, Palatine Park District, wants the infrastructure removed.
  - c. Status: Golf Nation has stated its intent to remove the infrastructure, but it failed to remove the infrastructure by the September 1, 2009 deadline. Golf Nation stated that the failure to complete the project was due to the contractor. The Palatine Park District Board has directed its staff to work with the INPC to seek recourse with the Attorney General's office if the project has not been completed by October 1, 2009.
- 9. **Wolf Road Prairie NP, Cook County - Steven Byers, Jenny Skufca**
  - a. Issue: The Village of Westchester is seeking approval from the FPDCC to route infrastructure along 31<sup>st</sup> Street (adjacent to Wolf Road Prairie NP) and along Hickory Lane.
  - b. Threat: Potential direct threat posed by construction activities along 31<sup>st</sup> Street. Indirect threat from conversion of three 5-acre lots along Hickory Lane into a more dense development. There is no existing easement for the proposed sewer line work along Hickory Lane.
  - c. Status: A resolution submitted to the FPDCC Real Estate Committee to grant approval for installation of infrastructure failed to pass. The INPC submitted formal comments to the Committee regarding easement concerns. The issue may go before the full Board of Commissioners of the FPDCC in October, 2009.
- 10. **Wadsworth Prairie NP, Lake County – Jenny Skufca, Steven Byers**
  - a. Issue: The Wetland Initiative has proposed to construct and place an inflatable weir in the Des Plaines River to conduct studies on hydrology, sediment, and nutrient loading in the River.
  - b. Threat: The weir would impound the Des Plaines River, backing water into the NP and threatening a population of a federally-listed orchid.
  - c. Status: The INPC submitted formal comments to The Wetland Initiative expressing its opposition to this project.
- 11. **Kemper Park NP, Kane County – Steven Byers**
  - a. Issue: The Village of Carpentersville proposed to construct a water detention basin in the NP to alleviate flooding in a nearby neighborhood.
  - b. Threat: Direct impact to the NP; indirect impact to the hydrology.

- c. Status: INPC staff met on site and suggested several alternatives; to include permitted use of a camera to identify debris in the storm sewer. The INPC subsequently granted a permit to remove the identified debris.
12. **Eastern Prairie Fringed Orchid NP, Lake County – Steven Byers**
- a. Issue: The IDOT intends to widen Illinois Route 22. The proposal for this site provided for this construction and includes construction of a berm in order to reduce the width of the road project.
  - b. Threat: Indirect threat posed by sedimentation and subsequent increase in reed canary grass on the population of a federally-threatened orchid.
  - c. Status: INPC staff facilitated an orchid count, and a site visit with IDOT staff to look at construction limitations and identify mitigation measures to ensure a healthy orchid population.
13. **Dixie Fromm Briggs Prairie NP, Kane County – Jenny Skufca, Steven Byers**
- a. Issue: A residential neighbor removed rocks from within the NP.
  - b. Threat: It is a violation of the Illinois Natural Areas Preservation Act to remove rocks from a NP.
  - c. Status: A police report was filed by the NP landowner, Dundee Township, with no perpetrator identified. The rocks were returned to the NP without event.
14. **Superior Street Prairie LWR, Cook County – Kim Roman**
- a. Issue: A portion of the prairie was mowed by the Calumet City Public Works Department.
  - b. Threat: Encroachment to the LWR.
  - c. Status: INPC staff submitted a letter to the Mayor of Calumet City requesting that unlawful activities at the site cease. Stewardship projects at the site will be initiated as mitigation for the encroachment.
15. **Goose Lake Prairie NP, Grundy County – Kim Roman**
- a. Issue: Proposed inspection and repair of a natural gas pipeline that runs through the NP.
  - b. Threat: Disturbance to prairie and soil.
  - c. Status: Staff developed measures and restrictions for the project implementation. Staff conducted site inspections to ensure compliance.
16. **Hickory Creek Barrens NP, Will County – Kim Roman**
- a. Issue: Sedimentation on the NP due to off-site land development.
  - b. Threat: Direct impacts to the NP.
  - c. Status: The INPC has recently had all related documents subpoenaed. The INPC Chair, Jill Riddell, signed the consent agreement, but to date the finalized order has not been received.
17. **Kinney's Ford Seep LWR, Vermilion County – Mary Kay Solecki, Kelly Neal, Randy Heidorn**
- a. Issue: The IDNR addressed a drainage issue on its property near the LWR by removing fill and ballast in an old rail embankment down to a pair of culverts. The contractor, a local road commissioner, asked and received permission from the IDNR to store excess fill in the parking lot area within the LWR. There was more fill than anticipated, and the piles were also placed in a disturbed area of the LWR in and adjacent to the parking lot slated for restoration. This work was done in the fall of 2008 and came to the attention of the INPC in mid-April, 2009.
  - b. Threat: Erosion control was not put in place, and silt had potentially washed into wetland areas containing state-listed species. The CERP for this project did not include storage of the fill in the LWR, and INPC approval was not sought for the storage of the fill in the LWR.
  - c. Status: Silt fencing has been put in place. The INPC worked with the Endangered Species Protection Board (ESPB) and IDNR staff to review procedures that led to the placement of the fill within the LWR without proper authorization and to correct deficiencies. It is anticipated that the fill will be removed by late September, 2009. Ms. Solecki and Ms. Neal met on-site with INPC, IDNR, and ESPB staff to determine actions needed to minimize impacts to listed species and provided input to the action plan and corrective measures. A letter was drafted and sent by the INPC Chair, Jill Riddell, to the IDNR Director, Marc Miller. The stock piled fill should be out of the LWR by September 22, 2009.
18. **Columbia Quarry-White Rock LWR, Monroe County – Debbie Newman**
- a. Issue: Unknown person(s) sprayed a path from a logging road down through woods to edge of the bluff. A path was also sprayed along the bluff, killing the hill prairie. With this site being remote, it will be difficult to determine who did this.
  - b. Threat: Decimated a portion of the hill prairie.

- c. Status: The contractor working at the site posted a “Do Not Spray” sign at the area.
- 19. **Prairie of the Rock Overlook LWR, Randolph County – Debbie Newman**
  - a. Issue: Unknown persons have ridden ATVs all over the site below the hill prairie.
  - b. Threat: ATV damage throughout the site.
  - c. Status: The INPC is working with the landowner’s tenant farmer and Prairie du Rocher Police to eliminate the activity.
- 20. **Salt Lick Point LWR, Monroe County – Debbie Newman**
  - a. Issue: An individual bulldozed approximately one-quarter of an acre area across LWR line.
  - b. Threat: Encroachment in the LWR.
  - c. Status: INPC staff and a Conservation Police Officer are working with the neighbor to remedy the situation and prevent future incursions.
- 21. **DesPain Wetlands LWR, St. Clair County – Debbie Newman**
  - a. Issue: A neighbor to the LWR had a survey done and posted boundaries on the LWR, claiming an additional 30-50 feet as his property.
  - b. Threat: Boundary intrusion; no damage to the LWR.
  - c. Status: INPC staff is working to resolve the survey issue.
- 22. **Mermet Swamp NP, Massac County – Judy Faulkner Dempsey, Jenny Skufca**
  - a. Issue: An adjacent landowner requests that the NP landowner, the IDNR, remove beaver dams to allow water to drain more quickly from field drain tiles.
  - b. Threat: Removing beaver dams will drain the NP.
  - c. Status: At the request of IDNR Legal staff, the INPC submitted formal questions to the IDNR District Heritage Biologist and IDNR Site Superintendent regarding the timeline of placement of drain tiles in relation to the beaver dam construction. It was confirmed that beaver activity had been ongoing prior to installation of the drain tiles. The INPC has been advised by IDNR Legal staffs that, with the information available at this time, beaver dams are naturally holding water in the NP and are not responsible for water holding on the adjacent property.

## **VII. Stewardship Program:**

- A. Field staff conducted site surveillance at several NPs and LWRs.
- B. John Nelson, Steven Byers, and Kelly Neal coordinated initial planning meetings for the development of a gypsy moth control policy for the INPC and the Chicago Wilderness region. The meeting was hosted by Steven Byers and Sue Hayden, MCCD.
- C. Kelly Neal:
  - 1. Has been working with IDNR Systems and Licensing staff to design a new database for INPC special-use permits.
  - 2. Conducted various activities with TNC’s Volunteer Stewardship Network (VSN) including:
    - a. Monitoring the VSN listserve and providing INPC clarification or information as needed.
    - b. Working with TNC’s Volunteer Coordinator, completed the purchase and distribution of equipment used by volunteers for stewardship at INPC sites.
    - c. Represented the INPC at VSN meetings in northern and central Illinois.
- D. At the request of the IDNR, INPC’s Stewardship staff was asked to evaluate impacts and make stewardship recommendations regarding the removal of a portion of a railroad embankment to improve drainage on property neighboring the IDNR’s Middle Fork State Fish and Wildlife Area. In addition to erosion concerns, there may have also been impacts to a state-threatened species habitat and potential take. Kelly Neal organized a site visit with Mary Kay Solecki, ESPB staff, and IDNR staff. Ms. Neal then compiled information and worked with Randy Heidorn and Mary Kay Solecki in creating a report and a recommendation memo to the IDNR.
- E. Stewardship Planning:
  - 1. Kelly Neal reviewed four management schedules, two unscheduled management activities, and one management related CERP.
  - 2. Deborah Stone, Randy Heidorn, Steven Byers, and Kim Roman participated in several meetings related to the USEPA Great Lakes Restoration Initiative grants - Sustain our Great Lakes including :
    - a. A meeting with a stakeholder in the Waukegan Area of Concern area hosted by the Waukegan Citizen Advisory Group.

- b. A meeting coordinated by Steven Byers with stakeholders of NPs in the Chicago Lake Plain Section to discuss funding opportunities for stewardship through - for habitat and restoration of 22 Chicago Lake Plain sites.
3. John Nelson:
  - a. Met with board members of the Brookville Lutheran Cemetery Association to discuss management needs at Brookville Lutheran Cemetery Prairie NP. Mr. Nelson submitted a new five year management plan and schedule.
  - b. Met at Freeport Prairie NP with the site steward and local volunteers to discuss management activities and site needs. A five year management plan was submitted to the landowner, the Jane Adamsland Parks Foundation.
  - c. Worked with NLI staff to submit a new three year management plan for approval for Howard D. Coleman Dells NP.
  - d. Met with staff of Sterling Rock Falls Family YMCA Camp Merrill M. Benson LWR to discuss controlled burn plans and other management priorities.
4. Steven Byers:
  - a. Coordinated with Friends of the Forest Preserve and the FPDCC to secure a grant with the Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelley Foundation for restoration activities at Thornton Lansing Road NP.
  - b. Coordinated a hands-on demonstration of restoration activities at Wolf Road Prairie NP, with Jack Pizzo, for the American Society of Landscape Architects.
5. Kim Roman:
  - a. Met with Forest Preserve District of Will County staff for the annual review of management/stewardship issues associated with all 15 of its sites enrolled in INPC programs.
  - b. Met with a potential volunteer steward at Short Pioneer Cemetery Prairie NP.
6. Angella Moorehouse:
  - a. Coordinated with the NLI and met with staff from the Rock Island County Soil and Water Conservation District and volunteers from the Quad Cities Natural Area Guardians to discussion management and restoration plans for the 92-acre NLI tract at Milan Bottoms.
  - b. Met with representatives from the Prairie Land Conservancy, the new owner of Jamar Haven LWR and Stony Hills NP, to post NP boundary signs and to discuss management and restoration issues.
7. Tom Lerczak:
  - a. Met on-site with landowners to discuss management at McCune Sand Prairie LWR and developed a short-term (2009-2010) management strategy for the LWR.
  - b. Met with the Land Conservation Foundation to discuss management of Mettler Woods NP.
  - c. Provided information to the Wetlands Initiative, owners of Thomas W. and Elizabeth Moews Dore Seep NP, regarding floodplain management.
  - d. Began compiling the FY10 herbicide order.
  - e. Provided herbicide to volunteers and contractors for use at sites enrolled in INPC programs.
  - f. Assisted distribution of INPC staff herbicide orders, signs, and sign posts.
8. Mary Kay Solecki provided management plans for NPs, LWRs and NHLs within the Vermilion River COA to the COA project manager to be used in habitat/stewardship implementation plans for the COA.
9. Debbie Newman:
  - a. Worked with a committee on developing a plan for a large Environmental Quality Incentives Program grant for Salt Lick Point LWR.
  - b. Worked with Clifftop and the IDNR on strategy development for a CCPI Natural Resources Conservation Service focus area in the Northern Ozark Natural Division COA.
10. Bob Edgin contacted owners of six sites enrolled in INPC programs to discuss short and long-term management objectives.
11. Judy Faulkner Dempsey:
  - a. Attended Joint Venture Partnership meetings on the Cache River to better manage and protect the area and make long range plans for the area's future.
  - b. Conducted a field trip for the owner of Horsefly Ridge NP to educate owner about the benefits of prescribed burning.
  - c. Met with Chris Evans, River to River Invasive Species Coordinator, to obtain recent educational material for distribution.

- F. Stewardship project implementation: Staff continued to coordinate and administer stewardship projects, including the Hill Prairie Project, funded by the Landowner Incentive Program, a State Wildlife Grant, the Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program, an EPA 319 Grant, the Natural Areas Acquisition Fund, and the INPC operations fund. These projects involve meeting with landowners, securing landowner agreements, preparation of grant applications, preparing bid packages, supervising contractors, and assisting in conducting restoration activities. Contractor work included prairie reconstruction and seed purchase, exotics and woody species control, dump cleanup, erosion control, boundary survey, fence construction and sign posting, and prescribed burn site preparation and burn crews. Sites where this kind of work occurred include:
1. Area 1: Kinnikinnick Creek NP, Boone Creek Fen NP, and Pistakee Bog NP
  2. Area 2: Sterne's Fen NP, 10 high-quality wetland basins in McHenry County, and a high-quality fen wetlands in northeastern Illinois.
  3. Area 3: Old Plank Road Prairie NP, Goose Lake Prairie NP, Maze Woods LWR, Butterfield Creek Headwaters LWR, Messenger Woods NP, and Sand Ridge NP.
  4. Area 6: Monticello's Sangamon River LWR, and Shady Rest LWR.
  5. Area 8: Lost Creek Marsh LWR and NP.
  6. Area 9: Ren-Dill Shale Glade NP, Faulkner-Franke Pioneer Railroad Prairie NP, Circle B Ranch LWR, Horsefly Ridge NP, and Degognia Canyon LWR.
- G. Land management conducted by staff:
1. John Nelson:
    - a. Participated at a workday at Gladstone Fen NP.
    - b. Performed several days of management activities at Harlem Hills NP and Boone Creek Fen NP.
    - c. Posted new boundary signs at Brookville Lutheran Cemetery Prairie NP.
  2. Steven Byers participated in stewardship activities with volunteer stewards (pulling garlic mustard and herbicide application) at a number of NPs.
- H. Kim Roman conducted regular stewardship activities at Goose Lake Prairie NP, Long Run Seep NP, DesPlaines Dolomite Prairies LWR, Sweet Fern Savanna LWR, Voight-Pauper Cemetery Prairie LWR, Short Pioneer Cemetery Prairie NP, and Superior Street Prairie LWR.
- I. Mary Kay Solecki conducted invasive species control and other stewardship activities such as boundary posting, planting, and trash/litter cleanup at several sites, including: Prospect Cemetery Prairie NP, Barnhart Prairie Restoration NP, Unity East Prairie Restoration, and Rocky Branch NP.
- J. Debbie Newman:
1. Removed sweet clover, garlic mustard, and honeysuckle at five sites.
  2. Continued working with volunteers at Salt Lick Point LWR.
- K. Bob Edgin:
1. Conducted invasive species control at Allison Gravel Prairie NHL, Green Prairie NHL, Horn Prairie Grove LWR, Beall Woods NP, Chauncey Marsh NP, Marjorie Brines White Oak Woods LWR, Padgett Pin Oak Woods LWR, Red Hills Woods NP and Robeson Hills NP.
  2. Posted boundary signs at Culley Barrens LWR.
  3. Installed a fire line at Padgett Pin Oak Woods LWR.
- L. Judy Faulkner Dempsey organized and gathered materials and volunteers to post boundaries at Horsefly Ridge NP.



# Exhibit B

**Illinois Department of Natural Resources  
Report to the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission  
September 22, 2009**

**Illinois Natural Areas Inventory (INAI) update**

As of the end of August, 2009, the regional ecologists have successfully completed the first stage of the screening process for 53 counties with a total of 2095 potential sites being identified. To date during this growing season, the regional ecologists have determined that 1462 of those sites are non-qualifying. Initial ground surveys have been completed on 347 sites, with final field surveys completed on 44 sites. Nomination packets will be generated for qualifying sites and sent to the appropriate Natural Heritage Biologist for consensus and formal nominations. Reporting functions for the database are still in development and sites will not be nominated until those are complete.

Re-evaluations of existing INAI sites, which was started last year, continues to proceed.

Deanna Glosser with Environmental Planning Solutions sent out a questionnaire about problems facing natural areas in Illinois to be used in creating The Strategic Natural Areas Preservation Plan. Responses have not been collated at this time.

**Natural Areas Evaluation Committee (NAEC)**

The 52<sup>nd</sup> NAEC meeting was held on July 21, 2009. Category III was added to three sites due to actions taken at previous Illinois Nature Preserves Commission (INPC) meetings. A discussion was held about allowing the Natural Areas Program staff the authority to make changes without the approval of the whole NAEC. Approval was given to allow the following changes. The NAEC delegates the following actions to the Natural Areas Program staff: the addition of a Cat III feature to an existing INAI site, boundary changes to an existing INAI site as a result of the addition of a Cat III feature, a name change to an existing INAI site, editorial changes to the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) INAI Standards & Guidelines that bring the document into compliance with existing laws, policies, and procedures; modifications to data forms, measurements, and other data collection protocols that do not affect the type, format, and summarization of vegetation data; editorial corrections to the INAI Standards & Guides, and similar edits. All such actions taken by the Natural Areas Program staff will be presented to the NAEC at each quarterly meeting as a confirming resolution.

**Land acquisition**

Five tracts of land totaling 685 acres with acquired using the Natural Areas Acquisition Fund since the last INPC meeting. Three additional natural area tracts totaling 20 acres were donated to the IDNR by their owners.

Lenore Higgins of Newton donated 10 acres of Grandville Woods natural area in Jasper County to the IDNR in May, 2009. Grandville Woods is a nearly undisturbed floodplain forest remnant on the North Fork of the Embarras River in southeastern Illinois. Bob Edgin was instrumental in arranging this donation.

Thirty six acres were acquired in June, 2009 to enlarge Black Crown Marsh State Natural Area in McHenry County. The acquisition will protect more of the wetland and prevent incompatible development. Black Crown Marsh State Natural Area is now 380 acres. OpenLands and Ducks Unlimited contributed funds to complete the project.

Two acres were acquired in June, 2009 to enlarge Cache River State Natural Area in Pulaski County. American Land Conservancy assisted in protecting this tract by preacquiring and holding the tract for IDNR.

Sixty two acres were acquired in June, 2009 to enlarge Lovett's Pond State Natural Area in Jackson County. Lovett's Pond is a significant wetland in the lower Mississippi River bottomlands in southern Illinois. The Nature Conservancy assisted by preacquiring this tract. This state natural area is now 152 acres in size.

Twenty nine acres were acquired in July, 2009 to enlarge Mississippi Palisades State Park in Carroll County. This park, which includes a National Natural Landmark and a dedicated nature preserve, is now 2,439 acres in size.

Five hundred fifty five acres were acquired in July, 2009 to establish Wise Ridge State Natural Area in Johnson County. Wise Ridge is a large, entirely wooded tract, in the Shawnee Hills. The tract contains all of the 234-acre Wise Ridge natural area, recognized on the INAI for high-quality dry forest, dry-mesic forest and limestone glades. Federal LAWCON funds were matched with Natural Areas Acquisition Fund (NAAF) dollars to acquire the tract.

The Nature Conservancy donated 10 acres of Bohbrink Woods natural area to the IDNR in August, 2009. Bohbrink Woods, located in the Southern Till Plain in southwestern Illinois, is a good example of a flatwoods natural community.

AT&T donated a small inholding (.36 acres) at Goose Lake Prairie State Park to the IDNR in August, 2009.

### **Sustainable natural landscaping**

The IDNR is in the processing of planning to implement a sustainable natural landscaping plan for around the headquarters building in Springfield. This effort has been done in conjunction with the Illinois Green Industry Association. A planning charrette was held on July 29 – 30, 2009. Information about the effort and preliminary designs from the charrette can be viewed on the IDNR webpage. <http://www.dnr.state.il.us/education/watchusgrow.htm>

### **Personnel**

Mike Conlin retired as Director of the Office of Resource Conservation on July 31, 2009. Mike worked with IDNR for 38 years, primarily as the Chief of the Fisheries Division.

John Rogner was named as assistant director of the IDNR in July, 2009. Mr. Rogner joined IDNR from the US Fish and Wildlife Service where he served since 1998 as supervisor of the Chicago Field Office, and he chaired the Chicago Wilderness coalition for the past 10 years.

Three new natural heritage residents were hired. Mark Alessi will work with Terry Esker in southeastern Illinois; Duane Ambroz will work with Brad Semel in northeastern Illinois.

Glen Kruse retired as Chief of the Division of Natural Heritage on August 31, 2009. Mr. Kruse was with the IDNR and Endangered Species Protection Board for 27 years. Don McFall was named Acting Chief of Natural Heritage effective September 1, 2009. Mr. McFall has been with IDNR for 16 years and the INPC for 9 years.

# Exhibit C



# ILLINOIS ENDANGERED SPECIES PROTECTION BOARD

*One Natural Resources Way, Springfield, Illinois 62702 - 1271, (217) 785-8687; FAX (217) 785-2438*

## **Illinois Endangered Species Protection Board report for the September 22, 2009 Illinois Nature Preserves Commission meeting**

Submitted by Anne Mankowski, Director

**The Board held its 142<sup>nd</sup> meeting on May 15, 2009 at Starved Rock State Park, Utica, Illinois and its 143<sup>rd</sup> meeting on August 14, 2009 at the Illinois Audubon Society Headquarters, Springfield, Illinois. Board actions and other items from the meetings included**

### **1. 5-Year List Review ending in 2009**

Board staff assisted the DNR Legal Department and with the preparation of proposed amendments to IL Administrative Rules 1010 (List of IL E&T Fauna) and 1050 (List of IL E&T Flora). The proposed amendments were posted for First Notice on June 12, 2009 with the comment period ending July 27, 2009. They were filed on Second Notice August 27, 2009 and scheduled for consideration at the September 15 JCAR Meeting. Upon official adoption, including final administration by DNR Legal, revised lists will be posted to the ESPB webpage.

### **2. Biennial Report for JULY 2006 – JUNE 2008 (With addenda covering biennia July 2002 – June 2006)**

The subject report was approved as final by the Board at the 143<sup>rd</sup> meeting and was subsequently posted to the ESPB webpage (with email notice sent) and hard copies were distributed to Governor Pat Quinn, Illinois General Assembly, Illinois State Library, Office of Management and Budget, DNR Director Marc Miller, Assistant Director John Rogner, Deputy Directors Leslie Sgro and Deb Stone, and ORC Director Mike Conlin.

### **3. Budget**

In the March 18, 2009 release of the proposed FY10 state budget there was no recommended appropriation identified for the Board and that had not changed as of July 30. The Board has been without a budget since 2002. The current DNR-funded contract with the Illinois Natural History Survey that solely covers the personnel services expenses to employ the Board's Director has been renewed for FY10. At its 143<sup>rd</sup> meeting, the Board approved a FY11 Budget request that was subsequently sent to DNR Director Marc Miller. That request is for \$329,800 to reinstate the full staffing and performance of the Board by funding three staff (including operating expenses), reestablishing the Board's research program that currently relies solely on an annual allocation of \$25,000 from the Wildlife Preservation Fund, and reimbursing member expenses incurred in the performance of their duties.

### **4. Resolutions**

At its 143<sup>rd</sup> meeting, the Board passed two resolutions commending the dedicated service of two long-term DNR staff; Mr. Mike Conlin and Mr. Glen Kruse.

Mr. Conlin began with the as a District Fisheries Biologist in 1971, was promoted to the position of Fisheries Division Chief in 1975, and then to the position of Office of Resource Conservation Director in 2004 until 2009 – some 38 years total.

Mr. Kruse began his career with the DNR in 1982 with the Division of Fisheries, became the Project Manager for the Illinois Endangered Species Protection Board in 1986, and then moved to the Division of Natural Heritage as the Endangered Species Project Manager in 1990, Endangered Species Program Manager in 1995, Acting Chief in 2000, and then Chief in 2006 until 2009 – some 27 years total.

## **5. New Member Nomination**

At its 142<sup>nd</sup> meeting, the Board reviewed members' appointment status and vacancies. At that meeting, Board member Dr. Chris Phillips indicated that he chose not to seek reappointment, but would continue serving until replaced. At its 143<sup>rd</sup> meeting, the Board approved a recommendation to Governor Pat Quinn for the appointment of Mr. Glen W. Kruse to the Board. Mr. Kruse retired from the DNR in August, after 27 years of service. The Board currently has one vacancy and six members serving on expired terms.

## **6. Letter to the US Forest Service re: comments on the Proposed Decision Memo for RX burning at Atwood Research Natural Area, Ozark Hill Prairie Research Natural Area, and Opossum Trot Trail Biological Area in the Shawnee National Forest.**

The letter (attached) acknowledged the long history of management coordination between the State and USFS; applauded the USFS efforts in carefully assessing and including prescribed fire as a management tool used to restore the important ecosystems of the Shawnee; and, commended the Shawnee's consideration of a total of 55 Illinois endangered or threatened plant species and 12 Illinois endangered or threatened animal species in the viability and biological evaluation documents, noting that while some of these species are included in the Regional Forester Sensitive Species Lists, the consideration of the additional Illinois listed species underscores a commitment by the Forest Service to work cooperatively with the State of Illinois for the benefit of some of our rarest resources. Only supportive comments were received during the comment period and the Decision to manage the three natural areas with fire and mechanical methods was signed on June 30<sup>th</sup>.

## **7. Research Program**

At its 143<sup>rd</sup> meeting, the Board approved a Request for Proposal package highlighting seven research topics (listed below). The FY10 research budget is funded solely by a \$25,000 allocation from the Illinois Wildlife Preservation Fund. The RFP was distributed to 84 researchers at 37 institutions or organizations with a closing date of October 16, 2009.

### **Fish**

1. Evaluation of Distribution, Movements, and Habitat Use of River Redhorse (*Moxostoma carinatum*) and Greater Redhorse (*Moxostoma valenciennesi*) in the Upper Illinois River Basin.

2. Status of *Ammocrypta clarum* (Western Sand Darter) in the Middle Kaskasia River and *Fundulus catenatus* (Northern Studfish) in Southwestern Illinois.

### **Reptiles and Amphibians**

3. Surveys for the Ornate Box Turtle in Illinois.

### **Plants**

4. Glacial Relict Monitoring.

5. Experimental Reintroduction of Species Extirpated from Illinois.

6. *Polygala incarnata* germination ecology.

7. *Asclepias lanuginosa*: Genetic and Population Studies Leading to a Recovery Plan

## **8. Staff Coordination with DNR and INPC**

- Coordinated with the Endangered Species Program ORC, Division of Wildlife ORC, Impact Assessment Section OREP, Office of Land Management, Office of Law Enforcement, Office of Legal Counsel, Media Relations, and Illinois Nature Preserves Commission, on multiple matters, including:
  - DNR Management and Tracking System training and planning.
  - State Fair assistance including development of displays (ESPB General, Research, Bald Eagle Recovery Success Story).
  - Met with ORC and INPC to discuss opportunities for improved communication and coordination.
  - Assistance to Natural Heritage and Law Enforcement – bald eagle mount and turtle ID, king rail harassment and enforcement of IESPA.
  - Represented ESPB at meetings of the Natural Areas Evaluation Committee.
  - Provided comments on proposed amendments to Incidental Take Authorization Ad Rule.
  - Provided comments on 14 ITA Conservation Plans.
  - Assisted ORC, INPC, and OREP regarding DNR CERP process and construction specifications for project #09000968 involving Middle Fork State Fish and Wildlife Area and Kinney Ford Land and Water Reserve.
  - Assisted DNR, INPC, and USFWS in review and development of an initial USFWS/IDNR proposal for headstarting and translocation of ornate box turtles (*Terrepenne ornate*; proposed for listing as Illinois threatened) in JoDaviess and Carroll Counties.
  - Assisted DNR and IDOT review of unauthorized herbicide spraying at 12-mile Prairie INAI site, Marion, Fayette, Clay, and Effingham Counties, Illinois.
  - Accepted the request by DNR to assume the role of project manager for a Barn Owl Recovery Planning and Implementation SWG project that will prevent the DNR from returning previously granted federal aid funding.
  - Assisted DNR Legal in amending IL 17 AD CODES 1010 (IL E&T Fauna) and 1050 (IL E&T Flora).
  - Provided review of proposed ordinance regulating the siting of wind energy conversion systems in Mason County.
  - Conferred with Natural Heritage Database ORC staff about the request for Board/ESTAC participation in updating state-ranks for listed species.

## 9. Staff Field Work

Assisted Natural Heritage Biologist, Ed Anderson, with trapping surveys for the Illinois mud turtle (*Kinosternon flavescens*) at Mineral Marsh INAI site, Henry County; assisted Natural Heritage Biologist, Bob Lindsay, with surveillance for *Thalia dealbata* (powdery thalia) in Alexander County; conducted surveillance for *Nothocalais cuspidata* (prairie dandelion) at Beach Cemetery Prairie NP, Ogle County and Revis Hill Prairie NP, Mason County; *Castilleja sessiliflora* (downy yellow painted cup) at Indian Bluff Hill Prairie NP, Rock Island County; *Isotria medeoloides* (small whorled pogonia) at Swayne Hollow NP, Randolph County; and, *Talinum calycinum* (fameflower) at Castle Rock INAI site, Randolph County.

## 144th meeting of the Illinois Endangered Species Protection Board

The next meeting of the Illinois Endangered Species Protection Board will be at 10:00 A.M. on November 13, 2009 at Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie visitor's center. This represents a change in location; public notice, email notification, and webpage posting of the change will be forthcoming.



# Exhibit D



# memorandum

**To:** Commissioners  
**From:** Kelly Neal, Jenny Skufca, Randy Heidorn  
**Date:** September 11, 2009  
**Subject:** Agenda Item 15 of the 203<sup>rd</sup> Meeting, September 22, 2009:  
INPC Staff Recommendation Regarding Pine Plantation Removal Request -  
Kinnikinnick Creek Nature Preserve, Boone County

## **I. Background**

The Boone County Conservation District (BCCD) seeks approval to restore oak savanna and woodland communities through commercially harvesting trees from within two pine plantations located along the boundary and partially within the Kinnikinnick Creek Nature Preserve. Pine plantation #1 is 4.5 acres in size and consists of red pine (*Pinus resinosa*) trees that are 60+ years old. This plantation is targeted for a complete timber harvest. Pine plantation #2 is 8.2 acres in size and consists of a mixture of red and white pine (*Pinus alba*) that are also approximately 60+ years old. The portion of pine plantation #2 outside the nature preserve buffer would have a tree thinning harvest resulting in an approximate 40% reduction in trees with an emphasis on leaving larger white pines. The portion of the pine plantation #2 which extends into the nature preserve buffer would have all pines removed. A timber company would harvest the pine trees for pulp and/or saw logs using tracked machinery during the winter months to minimize soil disturbance. Any slash or other woody debris resulting from the timber harvesting operation would be burned on-site by staff of the BCCD.

The removal of non-native pine trees would allow for oak savanna and oak woodland restorations consistent with the presettlement vegetation patterns documented at the Nature Preserve. Areas that undergo complete tree removal would be restored to native oak-hickory woodland. Over time, oak and hickory trees would be planted by BCCD staff on these sites. The goal is to have these trees propagated by BCCD staff from seed collected on nature preserve grounds. This will ensure that local genotypes are used. Any funds acquired from the commercial timber harvest would be used to support manage and restoration activities at the site. An updated three year management plan for the Nature Preserve is on file in Springfield and includes oak savanna and oak woodland restoration as management objectives.

## **II. Legal Authority**

There are no provisions under the Illinois Natural Areas Preservation Act which prohibit the sale of timber from within a nature preserve for purposes of restoration and management. Likewise, the Administrative Rules for Management of Nature Preserves do not prohibit the sale of timber if undertaken as part of an approved management plan. However, at the Commission's 162<sup>nd</sup> meeting, the following resolutions were adopted:

“There shall be no harvesting or taking of natural products for sale or barter from a nature preserve without prior Commission approval.” (Resolution 1468), and

“The Commission grants authority for the restoration effort of Baber Woods Nature Preserve with authorization to sell or barter wood products removed from the Nature Preserve during the restoration project, as described under Item 20 of the agenda for the 162<sup>nd</sup> Meeting.” (Resolution 1469). A similar proposal was approved at the last commission meeting for Sugar River Alder Nature Preserve. (Resolution 2039).

### **III. Analysis and Recommendation**

Kinnikinnick Creek Nature Preserve was dedicated in November, 1974, by the BCCD. The Nature Preserve contains high quality oak woodland that is actively managed by staff of the BCCD. The proposed timber harvest by a paper company will not negatively impact the natural features for which the site was dedicated as a nature preserve. Removal of the non-native pines will allow for restoration consistent with the presettlement vegetation patterns in the nature preserve buffer.

INPC staff recommends approval of this request.

# Exhibit E



# memorandum

**To:** Commissioners

**From:** Kelly Neal, Jenny Skufca, Randy Heidorn

**Date:** September 11, 2009

**Subject:** Agenda Item 16 of the 203<sup>rd</sup> Meeting, September 22, 2009:  
INPC Staff Recommendation to the Commission Regarding Proposal to Translocate the Silver-bordered Fritillary (*Boloria selene*) to Gensburg-Markham Prairie Nature Preserve, Cook County

## I. Background

Gensburg-Markham Prairie Nature Preserve was dedicated September 6, 1980, as the 77<sup>th</sup> Illinois Nature Preserve. The 173-acre Nature Preserve is owned by Northeastern Illinois University, The Nature Conservancy, and Natural Land Institute. Gensburg-Markham Prairie was included on the Illinois Natural Areas Inventory (INAI #400) for high-quality dry-mesic sand prairie, mesic sand prairie, mesic prairie and sedge meadow and is located in the Chicago Plain Section of the Northeastern Morainal Natural Division in southern Cook County.

The silver-bordered fritillary is a circumpolar species whose range includes northern and central Eurasia, and most of northern North America. It is absent from the high arctic. The species is an uncommon butterfly in Illinois. Largely confined to the northern half of the state, the species is restricted to higher quality prairie settings. Large populations exist at Goose Lake Prairie and the Iroquois Conservation Area where numerous small populations have been reported. These typically consist of very small numbers of individuals.

Plants in the genus *Viola* are the obligate hosts, however there has been little specificity demonstrated for species within the genus *Viola*. The butterfly is found in wet-mesic to wet prairie settings, and it is likely that a combination of host plant availability, nectar source availability, and vegetation structure define the species' habitat. In Illinois, there are three, and occasionally four annual broods.

*B. selene* is not listed as endangered or threatened in Illinois, nor is it a candidate for listing at either the state or the federal level. The species is highly colonial throughout much of its range (Kohler 1977). This highly colonial nature, combined with a narrow range of host plants, has resulted in the species becoming rare in peripheral parts of its range or in disjunct populations. It is protected as an endangered species both in the state of Washington and in England.

## II. Proposal

Dr. Doug Taron, Chicago Academy of Sciences, seeks to re-establish a population of the silver-bordered fritillary at Gensburg-Markham Prairie Nature Preserve in Cook County. The translocation has been preceded by and would be accompanied by considerable improvements to the hydrology and habitat at

Gensburg-Markham Prairie.

In July and August of 2009, gravid female *B. selene* were collected from the Commonwealth Edison Prairie adjacent to Goose Lake Prairie State Park in Grundy County. These were placed in pots in cages with leaves of *Viola sororia* to induce oviposition. Larvae will be reared to pupation on the cut leaves from host plants. If translocation is approved at Gensburg-Markham Prairie NP, pupae will be transported to the translocation site, placed in the field, and allowed to emerge in the area where they are to be established. Some pupae would also be retained and released as adults at the restoration site. Translocation is proposed for fall of 2009.

Monitoring will proceed under the direction of the Illinois Butterfly Monitoring Network. There will be 6-8 visits during July and August in subsequent years. Monitoring data will be entered into the Butterfly Monitoring Network database and will be provided to the Ecological Land Management team at Gensburg-Markham Prairie, as well as INPC.

### **III. Legal Authorities and Responsibilities**

The Rules for Management of Nature Preserves (17 Ill. Adm. Codes, Part 4000) Section 4000.425 Management of Vegetation and Wildlife [f] Introduction of plants and animals states that: no plants or animals or their reproductive bodies shall be brought into a nature preserve or moved from one place to another within a nature preserve except for the purpose of restoring degraded communities to the extent they are historically known or protecting or enhancing populations of endangered or threatened species. Such introductions shall be carried out as provided in the master plan, management schedule or pursuant to Section 4000.160 (Approval of Specific Management Activities).

### **IV. Analysis and Recommendation**

Despite consistent annual monitoring efforts, the silver-bordered fritillary has not been observed at the site since 2000 and is believed to be extirpated. Hydrological improvements to the site have resulted in an increase in *Viola spp.* host plants and restoration of the habitat favored by both the butterfly and plant. These changes should allow for successful establishment of the species if translocated.

Genetic information is not available on either the donor population or the population that once occurred at Gensburg-Markham, but it is believed that the two locations are close enough to have allowed for at least some genetic flow. If translocated, the population will be monitored annually.

Landowners of the donor site and recipient sites have given approval for the translocation and all other required permits have already been obtained by Dr. Taron.

INPC staff recommends approval of the translocation.

# Exhibit F



Illinois  
Nature  
Preserves  
Commission

memorandum

To: Commissioners

From: Jenny Skufca, Kelly Neal, and Randy Heidorn

Date: September 9, 2009

Subject: Staff recommendation regarding Item 17 – a proposal submitted by Lake County Forest Preserve District for the removal of a dam at Edward L. Ryerson Nature Preserve, Lake County.

**Background:**

Edward L. Ryerson Nature Preserve was dedicated April 27, 1972, as the 40<sup>th</sup> Illinois Nature Preserve. The 288.23-acre nature preserve, owned by Lake County Forest Preserve District (LCFPD) contains high quality floodplain and upland forest communities, which harbor nine state-listed species (INAI #0115). The Nature Preserve is located on the north bank of the Des Plaines River. The landowner owns both sides of the river at this location. Subsequent proposals for additions note that the Edward L. Ryerson Conservation Area, of which the nature preserve is a part, contains one the finest forests found in the Chicago region consisting of four distinct types: a wet floodplain forest of silver maple, ash, and hackberry along the Des Plaines River; a mesic sugar maple forest on the better-drained terrace soils; a dry-mesic upland forest of oaks and hickories; and a wet upland flatwoods forest containing swamp white oak, marsh and wet meadow.

**Proposal:**

The LCFPD is requesting permission to remove a dam (3' maximum height and 97' total dam length) on the upper Des Plaines River adjacent to the Nature Preserve to enhance habitat, stabilize the river section, improve navigability, and reconnect and increase genetic flow. Engineering studies conducted on behalf of the landowner show that the dam now has little impact on the river due to a six-foot gap between the sheet pile dam and the bank caused by erosion. A phased construction approach will allow management of river flows during implementation by diverting flows to the south while removing the north half of the dam and diverting flows to the north while removing the southern half. Modeling has shown that eliminating the dam will lower the surface level of the water approximately four (4) inches in the vicinity of the Nature Preserve. All staging of heavy equipment will occur across the river from the Preserve on LCFPD property, thereby avoiding direct impacts to the Nature Preserve during dam removal. The LCFPD proposal includes full compliance with all required permits after preliminary permission from stakeholders has been received. The INPC staff will review final plans prior to project



implementation.

### **Legal Authorities and Responsibilities:**

The Rules for Management of Nature Preserves, Approval of Specific Management Activities (17 Ill. Adm. Code 4000.160) state, “Management activities...may be approved by the Commission upon written request of the owner...If the Commission determines that the proposed activity will enhance the natural features of the preserve, consistent with the proposal for dedication, the Commission shall approve the request.” In addition, under Section 4000.440 of the Rules, “...Water levels which have been altered by artificial means...may be changed if identified in the master plan or management schedule as essential for the maintenance and restoration of natural conditions...”

### **Analysis:**

The draft Master Plan for the Edward L. Ryerson Nature Preserve states that, “Construction of the dam in 1957 near the Ryerson cabin altered the flow pattern of the river by increasing bank overflow upstream.” This dam removal proposal supports a regional effort in northeastern Illinois to remove dams to restore fragmented river segments into healthy ecosystems that allow fish access, stabilize eroding streambanks, and deter sediment collection which will improve the local communities’ drinking water quality and lower filtration costs. If approved, the INPC would become not only a partner in this effort, but a stakeholder in the inaugural dam removal in the Des Plaines River.

Upon INPC staff inquiry about progress in the effort of dam removal in northeastern Illinois, a recent success story was divulged. In the winter of 2008-2009, the Leonard Dam (3’ high x 100’ long) on Forked Creek in the Kankakee River watershed was removed. The Leonard Dam was a fixed height dam of similar proportion to the Ryerson dam. Recent sampling data collected in early September 2009 by IDNR fisheries biologists revealed not only an increase in species diversity upstream of the former dam site but also an improvement in the upstream ecosystem in just one season such that new riffle habitat appeared and occurrences of such habitat-sensitive species as darters and madtoms were recorded. Biologists expressed that this result was beyond their expectations for river health improvement in a season.

The location of Edward L. Ryerson Nature Preserve along the north bank of the Des Plaines River upstream and downstream of the dam, coupled with limited topographical relief leaves the Nature Preserve vulnerable to hydrological variation. The removal of the dam will naturalize river flow in this segment, allow riparian habitat to be restored, and encourage safe fish passage to an upstream segment fragmented for the last 50 years.

### **Staff Recommendation:**

No adverse impacts to the resources for which this site was dedicated can be identified. The Edward L. Ryerson Nature Preserve dam removal proposal will enhance natural conditions at the preserve. As a leader in Illinois land protection and defense efforts, the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission is now presented with a monumental opportunity to return this dedicated Illinois nature preserve to its “highest, best and most important use for the public benefit” as charged in the Illinois Natural Areas Preservation Act. The INPC staff recommend that approval be granted for the removal of this Des Plaines River

dam.

# Exhibit G



Illinois  
Nature  
Preserves  
Commission

memorandum

To: Commissioners

From: Jenny Skufca, Kelly Neal, and Randy Heidorn

Date: September 9, 2009

Subject: Staff recommendation regarding Item 18 - a proposal submitted by the Illinois Department of Transportation for the reconstruction of foreslopes and extension of drainage pipes at Black Hawk Forest Nature Preserve, Rock Island County.

**Background:**

Black Hawk Forest Nature Preserve was dedicated July 31, 1984, as the 125<sup>th</sup> Illinois nature preserve. The 106.6-acre Nature Preserve, owned by the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency (IHPA), has been recognized on the Illinois Natural Areas Inventory (INAI #0140) for its high quality dry-mesic upland forest community. Nearly 175 different species of birds have been observed using the forest and riverine habitats during the course of the year at the preserve which lies upon the bluffs of the Rock River. The Nature Preserve is part of Black Hawk State Historic Site established in 1927, therefore protected early on from encroaching urbanization. The preserve's southern boundary is Illinois Route 5, a busy thoroughfare for both local traffic and visitors to the site.

**Proposal:**

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) is requesting permission to perform preventative road work to correct the eventual collapse of Illinois Route 5. Much of the proposed work will occur within IDOT's easement at Black Hawk Forest Nature Preserve, however 0.306-acre within the preserve and outside of the easement will be impacted. The IDOT has prepared plans to reconstruct and stabilize existing erodible foreslopes and extend the ends of three drainage pipes in poor condition. The improvements must occur within the next year to prevent the eventual collapse of the roadway causing unsafe conditions for travelers. Rip rap will be used at the ends of the culverts, at the bottom of the slope and in the streambed to ensure that the adjacent waterway within the preserve will not be negatively impacted. Turf reinforcement mat will be utilized underneath rip rap in areas where soil is the substrate. All soil brought onto the Nature Preserve will be from a source site approved by the INPC staff. The forest community on the steep slope which will be impacted is highly degraded and contains a

number of non-native, invasive species. The project will improve conditions on the impacted slope by decreasing the steepness, slowing the velocity of water, seeding disturbed areas with native prairie species and improving the native tree diversity. The landowner, IHPA, and the INPC will have an opportunity to review and approve the plans before the proposed improvement is implemented. All future IDOT activities within the preserve must be approved by IHPA and INPC.

**Other considerations:**

Severe gully erosion is occurring in the far southeast corner of the nature preserve along Illinois Route 5 which is not within the scope of the IDOT project. The INPC staff has requested that the IDOT's engineers assist with identifying necessary repairs and associated costs. If possible, the INPC staff would prefer to see this repair work happen at the same time that the three roadway culverts and foreslopes are repaired to limit damage to the site and additional costs that may be incurred if contractors are required to bring heavy equipment to the Nature Preserve again at a later date.

**Legal Authorities and Responsibilities:**

The Rules for Management [17 Ill. Adm. Code 4000.180(b)] specifically address emergency situations in Illinois Nature Preserves as follows, "Emergency situations that require immediate action to prevent injury to persons or damage to property as determined by the custodian, the Commission, or the Department shall be handled in such manner as to cause minimal damage to natural conditions. Entry of motor vehicles or heavy equipment into a preserve shall be avoided if possible."

Also applicable to the Black Hawk Forest Nature Preserve road work proposal is Section 4000.460 regarding erosion control. The rule states, "...Erosion and soil deposition due to past or present disturbance by humans of natural conditions within or outside of the preserve may be controlled in accordance with the master plan or management schedule."

**Analysis:**

In the spring of 2002, heavy rains saturated the embankment of Highway 128 which borders Rock Cave Nature Preserve, Effingham County. This resulted in the embankment collapsing into the ditch and onto the Nature Preserve. The IDOT proposed to implement erosion control measures involving the placement of a pipe and reshaping the embankment to help protect the site from erosion and sedimentation, and repair a serious driving hazard. Resolution #1725, passed at the 179<sup>th</sup> INPC meeting on May 6, 2003, granted approval for the erosion control project at Rock Cave Nature Preserve.

Approval was granted at the INPC staff level for prior emergency road repairs at Black Hawk Forest Nature Preserve along Illinois Route 5 in 2006. At that time the emergency repairs included replacement of a culvert and installation of a series of drop boxes extending from a culvert downhill, including contour work to stabilize a slope approximately 20' into the preserve.

At Black Hawk Forest Nature Preserve, the IDOT has attempted to avoid or satisfactorily mitigate any adverse impacts to this Illinois Nature Preserve by developing plans in consultation with the INPC staff. The IDOT is proposing the current drainage pipe extensions and foreslope stabilization to prevent undermining of a well-traveled road.

**Staff recommendation:**

To ensure public safety, to stop the severe erosion at the site, and to prevent further degradation of the road infrastructure; INPC staff feels that this work will avert an inevitable emergency. The INPC staff recommends approval of this repair and stabilization along Illinois Route 5 at Black Hawk Forest Nature Preserve.

# Exhibit H



Illinois  
Nature  
Preserves  
Commission

memorandum

To: Commissioners

From: Jenny Skufca, Kelly Neal, and Randy Heidorn

Date: September 9, 2009

Subject: Staff recommendation regarding Item 19 - a proposal submitted by the Village of Romeoville for the construction of a bicycle trail at O'Hara Woods Nature Preserve, Will County.

**Background:**

O'Hara Woods Nature Preserve was dedicated September 15, 1982, as the 93<sup>rd</sup> Illinois nature preserve. The 80-acre Nature Preserve, owned by the Village of Romeoville, has been recognized on the Illinois Natural Areas Inventory (INAI #1372) as a high-quality prairie grove that historically provided habitat for the state-endangered Canada violet (*Viola canadensis*) which was last observed in 1986. The site is managed by the Village of Romeoville's Parks and Recreation Department and has been focused on public use, safety, and access. The natural communities within the Nature Preserve have had few, if any, traditional stewardship activities such as prescribed fire, woody control, and exotics control implemented. O'Hara Woods Nature Preserve also has a long history of unapproved bicycle and vehicular use, campfires, and littering. Bicycle riding at this site was never recommended as an allowable use at the time of dedication or in the site's draft master plan.

**Proposal:**

The Village of Romeoville is requesting permission for the construction of a bicycle trail along the northern edge of O'Hara Woods Nature Preserve. This bicycle trail will link to the regional Commonwealth Edison Corridor Trail, trails associated with the Village's nearby recreation center, and future neighborhood trails (maps included with agenda). Half of the proposed trail will be aligned on an existing sewer line which is currently a gravel road used for maintenance vehicles. The other half of the trail will be constructed in open, degraded habitat as northerly as possible without encroaching on a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers wetland mitigation area. The Village will deter non-authorized bicycle and motorized vehicle use by installing bollards, signs, bicycle racks, and split rail fencing in key areas. One old trail will be removed, and log barriers and signs notifying users to keep out will be installed.



### **Other Considerations:**

Approximately 40 acres of adjacent forest west of O'Hara Woods Nature Preserve has recently been acquired by the Forest Preserve District of Will County (FPDWC). The FPDWC's plans include partnering with the Village of Romeoville with the construction of the proposed trail, and dedicating its forested acreage as an addition to O'Hara Woods Nature Preserve. The Village will manage the maintenance of the bicycle trail within the entire Nature Preserve while the FPDWC will manage the natural communities within the entire Nature Preserve.

### **Legal Authorities and Responsibilities:**

For historical reference regarding the condition of O'Hara Woods Nature Preserve, the proposal for dedication, dated January 10, 1981, points out that "During World War II roads were cut through the woods and widely separate concrete structures erected for storage of dynamite." The instrument of dedication provides that "This dedication in no way limits the Village of Romeoville from ordinary maintenance or improvement of the existing roadway..." The "existing roadway" mentioned in the dedication document is only a portion of the site's trail system, but reflects the history of ongoing upkeep of thoroughfares within the Nature Preserve.

The Rules for Management of Nature Preserves (17 Ill. Adm. Code 4000.120.c) state that the "management, development, or uses of a specific preserve, not otherwise allowed under the rules, may be allowed as a provision of the master plan for the site, or may be approved by the Commission under Section 4000.160 of this Part." The pertinent statement in the cited section reads, "If the Commission determines that the proposed activity will enhance the natural features to the preserve, consistent with the proposal for dedication, the Commission shall approve the request." With regard to trails in nature preserves, Section 4000.260 states "...The establishment or rehabilitation of trails in a nature preserve may be proposed in writing to the Commission....Trails shall be laid out so as to affect only part of the preserve and shall have minimal impact on natural features....Trails should have no adverse impact on endangered or threatened species or fragile or limited natural communities or features..." Bicycle trails, however, may more appropriately be addressed by Section 4000.170 in that, although it is a historical use, it has never been approved as a use by the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission (INPC). The rule states, "There shall be no intrusions of...rights of way, or land uses...except...those approved as a deviation from the rules under Section 4000.160."

Section 4000.160 further delineates that "The Commission may, with reasonable notice to the custodian, withdraw approval for management activities previously granted if it is subsequently determined that the activity may have an adverse impact on the nature preserve."

### **Analysis:**

The INPC file documents from field staff (Don McFall) dated May 4, 1972, identify this site as "...old growth on hilly land bisected by a small clear stream...a very rich vernal flora of trilliums, dutchman's breeches, harbinger of spring...thickly covers the forest floor." The memo further describes that "A road loops through the forest." The proposal for dedication notes that "Floyd Swink, author of Plants of the Chicago Region, has rated O'Hara Woods as one of the finest maple forests in the region." Yet earlier in the proposal, the site was identified as "...part of a larger recreational complex." The INPC

files contain letter after letter describing “steps that might control bicycle and motorcycle traffic” and ways to “help eliminate unauthorized traffic on areas sensitive to erosion.” Natural conditions are almost always qualified with the mention of “balancing visitor use” and “off-trail visitor movement is the major source of disturbance” throughout the 1980s and 1990s. Therefore, from a nature preserve management standpoint, a more effective approach based on realistic use and urban location should have included the restricted allowance of multi-use trails upon dedication. However, since that was not the case, it is now clear that this change in use will improve the conditions of the site by limiting where the bicycles are allowed and enforcing those restrictions.

**Staff Recommendation:**

The field staff of the INPC has been approached multiple times by the Village of Romeoville regarding the construction of a bicycle trail through O’Hara Woods Nature Preserve. This recent proposal, as part of a regional plan, takes into consideration the sensitivity of O’Hara Woods Nature Preserve by aligning the trail at the northern edge and along an existing lane. Another key component to this proposal is the mutually beneficial partnership between the Village and the FPDWC, an agency with a demonstrated record of nature preserve and natural community management, to help ensure O’Hara Woods Nature Preserve is sustainable in the long term. While O’Hara Woods will receive more visitors with the creation of a legitimate trail system (inside the Nature Preserve and nearby), illegal activity can be deterred by allowing a properly planned trail that discourages off-trail use (physical barriers, old trail removal, placement of signs, etc.). Therefore, the staff of the INPC recommends to the Commissioners that the proposal be approved contingent upon agreement that the landowner will enforce no further expansion of unauthorized trail use within O’Hara Woods Nature Preserve.